

JPRS 77291

2 February 1981

Near East/North Africa Report

No. 2257



FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE

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CONTENTS

IRAN

- Thai Cook Helped Americans Escape in Iran
(BANGKOK POST, 23 Jan 81)..... 1
- Eric Rouleau Reports on Kurdistan 'Secret' War
(Eric Rouleau; LE MONDE, 13 Dec 80)..... 4

IRAQ

- Editorial Scores Syrian Regime's Internal Arab Policies
(Editorial; AL-THAWRAH, 5 Dec 80)..... 7

LEBANON

- Phalangist Leader Discusses Obstacles to New Form of Government
(Bashir al-Jumayyil Interview; AL-HAWADITH, 28 Nov 80) 10
- Options for Solution to Lebanese Crisis Considered
(Ghassan Bayram; AL-MUSTAQBAL, 29 Nov 80)..... 15

LIBYA

- Briefs
Finnish Firm Mapping Contract 23

MOROCCO

- Sahara is Moroccan, Cooperation Official Insists
(Abdelhaq Tazi Interview; L'OPINION, 17 Nov 80)..... 24
- Foreign Minister Assesses Paris, Moscow, Sofia Visits
(M'Hamed Boucetta Interview; L'OPINION, 18 Nov 80)..... 30
- Morocco's Strategy in Sahel Analyzed
(Zakya Daoud; LAMALIF, Nov 80)..... 39
- New Order of Dependence Discussed
(Driss Guerraoui; LAMALIF, Nov 80)..... 46

Agrarian Reform: A Total Failure (Hassan Akbour; LAMALIF, Nov 80).....	51
---	----

TUNISIA

Foreign Minister, GDR Counterpart Speak at Dinner (LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE, 6 Dec 80).....	63
Economy Minister Holds Meetings in GDR (LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE, 28 Nov 80).....	66
Defense Minister Visits Saharan Outposts (LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE, 10 Dec 80).....	67
Naval Base at Kelibia To Receive Reinforcements (LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE, 26 Nov 80).....	69
Bills Passed on Administrative Reorganization, IMF Quota (LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE, 29 Nov 80).....	70
Prime Minister Announces No Price Hikes (LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE, 14 Dec 80).....	74
Cooperation With Malta Reported (LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE, 10, 13 Dec 80).....	78
Prime Minister Invites Mintoff Mintoff's Departure Statement Joint Communique Issued	
Desalinization Plant Being Readied for 1982 (LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE, 28 Nov 80).....	82

THAI COOK HELPED AMERICANS ESCAPE IN IRAN

BK230630 Bangkok BANGKOK POST in English 23 Jan 81 pp 1, 3

[Text] A Thai cook who played an important role in the escape of six Americans from Tehran last January has returned to Bangkok after living 'underground' in the Iranian capital for more than a year to escape militant Iranian students.

Mr Somchai Siwaeonet, 39, said that his family, with which he had been out of contact for six months, reacted with shock and delight when he suddenly arrived at his modest home on Cheang Wattana Road in Bang Khen on Saturday.

Mr Somchai, whose air fare back to Bangkok was paid for by the Swiss Embassy, arrived home penniless.

"I did not even have the taxi fare," he said.

His role in helping the six Americans escape Iran following the seizure of the hostages on November 4, 1979, has been hailed by officials at the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok.

"He was a real hero of the hostage crisis," one official said.

Officials said Mr Somchai had also played a valuable role in passing on information about the hostages to the American Government through telephone calls to the Thai wife of hostage Victor Tomseth, who had previously served in Thailand.

Sitting on the floor of his wooden house, Mr Somchai told how his position as a cook for four of the embassy staff put him in a position to help their six colleagues flee Iran.

He said the four were Mr Tomseth and Kathryn Koob, Mr Rosen and Mr Roger, in whose house he was staying when the hostages were seized.

He said he had obtained his position with the other three through a recommendation from Mr Tomseth.

He said that after the Americans were taken hostage, he went to the homes of the four, for which he had the keys, and destroyed all the documents which he thought might be sensitive.

He also hid whisky and beer he found there because he knew their discovery would anger the Iranian students.

"Soon after being taken hostage, Mr Tomseth called me from the Foreign Ministry where he was being held and asked me to arrange for the hiding of six American diplomats who were then at the British Embassy," Mr Somchai recalled.

He said he immediately called the British Embassy, asking them to arrange to send the six Americans to the house of another American diplomat which was far from central Tehran.

The six were sent to the house in a British Embassy car and Mr Somchai said that while they were in hiding there he visited often to cook for them.

He said that by this time the Iranian militants had begun to search the houses of American diplomats and embassy employees and, concerned for their safety, he rang Mr Tomseth to ask what he should do.

Mr Somchai said he was told to contact the Canadian Embassy and ask them to send a car to pick up the six, who by this time had moved to Miss Koob's house nearby.

"I did not tell them why I needed the car but I think they understood," Mr Somchai said.

A car was sent to pick them up and Mr Somchai said 10 minutes after they left a carload of Iranian students arrived to search the house.

Mr Somchai said the students had questioned him, asking for his passport which he said was kept at the Royal Thai Embassy.

"I gave them a false passport number and deliberately misspelt my name because I was aware my name could go on their 'black list,'" Mr Somchai said.

Realising that his life was in danger, Mr Somchai went 'underground,' living with Thai, Korean and Iranian friends in Tehran.

He said he managed to eke out a living by selling paintings through Iranian friends.

He said he kept off the streets as much as possible and usually travelled by taxi to avoid being seen.

Mr Somchai said tensions over the hostages issue appeared to ease slightly about three months ago and he decided to apply for an exit visa which he managed to obtain with the help of the Royal Thai Embassy.

He said he was "very excited" when he arrived at Tehran's Mehrabad airport early on Saturday morning to check in for an Iran air flight to Bombay, where he caught a connecting Swissair flight to Bangkok.

"When I arrived at the airport the Iranian officials checked my name against the black list and I must admit that I was scared," Mr Somchai said.

"They checked every piece of clothing in my luggage and gave me a thorough body search. I was quite relieved when I finally got through," he said.

Mr Somchai said that in the months before he left Iran the people appeared to have become quite dissatisfied with life under Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni and there had been demonstrations calling for the return of the late shah's son in both Tehran and upcountry.

U.S. officials in Bangkok said yesterday that Mr Somchai was an important source of information about Iran until the last days of the crisis, and would sometimes relay information to the State Department through phone calls to Mr Tomseth's wife in Oregon.

Iranian Foreign Ministry officials opposed to the hostage-keeping sometimes allowed Mr Tomseth himself to call his wife, Wallapa.

To keep the conversations secret and avoid them being stopped by the Iranians, Mr Tomseth spoke in Thai, the U.S. officials said.

Mr Somchai arrived home to find his wife in financial difficulties.

He said she runs a small beauty salon and earned barely enough to cover school fees for their three children.

He was grateful that the principal of the school which his youngest daughter attends had delayed payment during his absence.

CSO: 4920

ERIC ROULEAU REPORTS ON KURDISTAN 'SECRET' WAR

Paris LE MONDE in French 13 Dec 80 p 6

[Article by special correspondent Eric Rouleau: "The 'Secret' War in Iranian Kurdistan: Part II -- The Second Front"]

[Text] On a visit to Paris, Secretary General Abdel Rahman Qasemlu of the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran (KDP) explained to Eric Rouleau that war is going on in Kurdistan quite apart from the Iraqi-Iranian conflict. According to Qasemlu, the Kurdish people see themselves as in effect "forced to carry on the struggle" against Khomeyni's regime, "rotten to the core," which refuses to negotiate seriously on autonomy.

Tehran—"Stop! You are not going through!" The pasdar [Iranian militiaman], with his automatic rifle at the ready, was adamant. The packed bus, which had just gone through the border post at Bazargan after having crossed Turkey from north to south, was not permitted to take the road to Tabriz and Tehran. All traffic was forbidden after sunset, the young militiaman explained, for there were "bandits" shooting, killing and robbing travellers. So the people in the bus resigned themselves to spending the night huddled in their seats, chilled to the bone.

On further inquiry, it turned out that the "bandits" were "peshmergas," Kurdish guerrillas, whose presence is felt in an area covering some 100,000 square km of Iran. They are everywhere and nowhere. And yet they control the foothills and countryside of Kurdistan. After night has fallen their word is law on the roads and they move around in towns where Tehran government soldiers and pasdars are as often as not forced to barricade themselves behind the doors of their barracks.

Contrary to what may have been thought, the KDP and its allies did not declare a truce when the war between Iraq and Iran broke out on 22 September. On 1 October KDP Secretary General Abdel Rahman Qasemlu issued a sort of ultimatum: "Tehran should recognize the principle of autonomy for Kurdistan and withdraw its troops from the province before Kurdish guerrillas agree to turn their weapons against the Iraqi invaders." Neither Qasemlu's proclamation, which was broadcast over the rebels' pirate radio, nor the Tehran government's implicit rejection of its terms was made known to the Iranian public. That public is still unaware that since that time hostilities have grown more intense. The Iranian leaders prefer to hide something which constitutes an exception to the rule of national unity. Of course, now and again the press does carry brief accounts of "incidents" or "clashes" caused by "mercenaries from America" or "counter revolutionaries", but only rarely does it specify what ethnic groups these "bandits" belong to.

However, the "secret" was of Kurdistan is no small matter. It is keeping at least a quarter of Iran's troop strength—3 of its 11 ground force divisions—pinned down, and this explains in part the absence or inadequacy of Iranian defenses along the war front with Iraq, which were inexplicable at first. Accounts given by travellers allow the extent of the conflict to be gauged. One traveller, for example, reports that outside Sanandaj he saw hundreds of tanks, heavy artillery pieces, and armored vehicles concentrated along a stretch of some 10 to 15 km. Another, who was travelling on the same route, was blocked for 36 hours halfway from Kermanshah while furious fighting was going on.

All the towns in Kurdistan, with two or three exceptions which have no strategic value, are in the hands of the Iranian Army and the pasdars. Three of these—Mahabad, Sardasht, and Piranshahr—were recaptured from the autonomists just before or right after the Gulf war began. More than 30,000 soldiers, not counting militiamen, are involved in the pacification operations. One of the most "turbulent" areas is the Mahabad-Saqez-Myandoab triangle. There are constant guerrilla attacks here as well as along the main road connecting Sanandaj, Kermanshah, Hamadan and Tehran—a road is of great strategic importance. The Baneh-Sardasht road running along the Iraqi border is far and away the most dangerous area since it is flanked by mountains and forests where snipers can set up ambush with impunity. It took an armored column 42 days to travel that road, some 50 km, at the cost of several hundred soldiers dead and dozens of vehicles destroyed.

Events make it look as if Kurdish guerrillas and Iraqi soldiers had divided up the task of defeating the Islamic Republic between themselves. Observation number one: the rebels operate in the northern part of Kurdistan, north of a line joining Qasr-el-Shirin with Kermanshah, an area populated mainly by Sunni Moslems and where the autonomist organizations are firmly entrenched; Iraqi troops have crossed the Iranian border and developed their offensive only in the southern part of Kurdistan, where the population, which is mostly of the Shiite Moslem faith, tends to be more supportive of the Khomeyni government. Observation number two: the "peshmargas" often mount assaults on localities which have just been bombed by the Iraqi Air Force.

'Collusion' With Baghdad

Is this coincidence or coordination? The Tehran authorities as well as the leadership of nearly all the political parties do not even ask that question. In their view, the KDP led by Qasemlu and its allies have concluded a joint action agreement with Saddam Husayn's regime. Ghani Bolurian, former first secretary of the KDP, left the party last June with six other Central Committee members precisely because they do not want to be "accomplices" in what they say was long-standing "collusion" between Qasemlu and Baghdad's leaders.

Bolurian, who lives in hiding although he shuttles between Kurdistan and Tehran, is considered a national hero by the Kurds: he is a veteran militant who spent 25 years of his life in the shah's jails, and he is 57 though he looks 10 years older. His political options, which are close to the Tudeh Party's, prompted Qasemlu to denounce him as a "Tudeh-ist" in disguise. His opinions could be summed up in a few simple ideas: "The Islamic Republic," he told me, "is engaged

in an anti-imperialist struggle which must have priority support; the struggle for the Kurdish people's autonomy must naturally be carried on, but only by political means." He added, with the strength of conviction: "At any rate there is no military solution to the Kurdish conflict."

Once these assumptions are spelled out, the indictment he draws up against Qasemlu follows naturally. Like the leaders of the Tudeh and of the People's Fedayeen (the majority faction), he accuses the KDP secretary general of working in close collaboration with leftist organizations, feudal chieftains, former SAVAK agents, and former officers of the imperial army in Kurdistan. Qasemlu classifies this assertion as a lie. These disparate groups have one thing in common: their desire to overthrow the Khomeyni republic using the material assistance they are receiving from Iraq.

According to Bolurian, Qasemlu never had any other goal. When we were talking Bolurian went on forever on this subject, listing the "lost opportunities" for an arrangement between the Kurdish movement and Tehran. He reproaches Qasemlu for having "stepped up demands which no government in the world could have reasonably satisfied," "selfishly raising the stakes" when the central government seemed ready for a compromise, and of thereby keeping a war going which he could not carry on without receiving funds, weapons and supplies from Iraq. Thanks to some KDP defectors, Bolurian has obtained documents which enable him to back up his argument. One of them, written by Qasemlu himself, is a receipt for a consignment of weapons sent from Baghdad. Another, also written by the Kurdish leader, refers to cooperation between Saddam Husayn's regime and the KDP, along the lines proposed at a secret meeting said to have taken place in June 1980 in Haj 'Omran with the Iraqi vice president, Taha Yassin Ramadan, present. The letter, handwritten by Qasemlu, expresses the hope that Baghdad would inform his party about deliveries of military supplies to other groups operating in Kurdistan. Photocopies of these documents have been published in KURDISTAN, the publication put out by the KDP wing headed by Bolurian, as well as in MARDOM, the main Tudeh communist party organ.

Tudeh Secretary General Nureddin Kianuri is even more vehement than Bolurian in denouncing the "Qasemlu clique," those "traitors to the Kurdish people and the Iranian homeland" who according to him have become "collaborators not only with Baghdad's fascist regime but also with the regimes of Israel and the United States." Kianuri says he has proof that Qasemlu has received "millions of dollars" from NATO, and he compares Qasemlu's "blind chauvinism" to that which led General Barzani, who at one time led the Kurdish rebellion in Iraq, to become an ally of the shah and the CIA.

The leaders of the Kurdish Association of Tehran as well as the People's Fedayeen (the Marxists-Leninists of the majority faction), who before the Iraqi-Iranian war were allies or comrades-in-arms of the KDP guerrillas, also place Qasemlu in "the camp of counter-revolution." Only the People's Mujahedin (progressive Moslems) refrain from any criticism other than saying in private that the "deviations" in the Kurdish movement, if there are any, can only be attributed "to the brutality of the repression" brought to bear by the government and to the government's refusal to take "the rightful claims of the Kurdish people" into consideration.

EDITORIAL SCORES SYRIAN REGIME'S INTERNAL ARAB POLICIES

Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 5 Dec 80 pp 1, 11

[Editorial: "Who Is Hafiz Al-Asad and What Does He Want?" (5)]

[Text] This is Hafiz al-Asad—his career, history, morals and positions. What does he want then? Hafiz al-Asad wants to maintain the Zionist occupation of the Golan heights so that he may be able to continue to trade with the cause.

This does not mean that he is just unwilling to regain the Golans. He is unable to do so even if he claimed to have the willingness to do it. Liberation requires a regime that is ideologically, politically and morally in tune with the great task of liberation. A liberating regime has to be principled, honest and closely associated with the people. Hafiz al-Asad cannot be that because he is not.

Among the foremost basic rules of success in the task of steadfastness and liberation is the construction of true and close relationships with the people. Fronts, pacts or arsenals just won't do if the regime is isolated from—indeed, hated by—the people.

Hafiz al-Asad cannot forge close ties with the people in Syria because the basis of his relationship with the people is wrong. For he has come to power through plotting, lying and the exploitation of sectarian and tribal fanaticism in Syria. He cannot therefore be close to the people, hence he cannot wage the battle of liberation.

If Hafiz al-Asad really wanted to liberate the Golan heights and Palestine, then one of the first things he ought to do is foster his relations with Iraq because Iraq is the country with the largest military, economic and human force in the Arab east and because it has always been a confrontation state poised against the Zionist enemy. The history of Hafiz al-Asad is one of plotting against Iraq and trying by all means to exclude it from the battlefield. In the first statement he issued after assuming full power in late 1970, he attacked Iraq and continued to follow a similar pattern for the next 10 years. And when brotherly relations were established between Iraq and Jordan which has the longest front against the Zionist enemy, Hafiz al-Asad and Menachem Begin lost their head at one and the same time and each one of them proceeded to threaten Jordan in an attempt to deter it from siding with Iraq. Is this the conduct of someone who wants to confront the enemy and liberate the occupied lands?

The main concern of Hafiz al-Asad's regime is not liberation. Liberation is just a disguise hiding its ugly character. Its first and last concern is to remain in power. What that regime fears most is a nationalist, revolutionary and honest regime which is closely linked to the people, such as the revolutionary regime established in Iraq by the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and struggler Saddam Husayn.

What is happening in Iraq poses an ultimate challenge to the fate of al-Asad's regime. The success of Iraq would spell the doom of al-Asad's regime in Syria for two major reasons. The first is the close bonds and mutual historical influence between the Iraqi and Syrian regions. The second is Hafiz al-Asad's false allegation that his regime is that of "the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party." Therefore, Hafiz al-Asad is willing to do anything and ally himself with the devil for the sake of destroying what is taking place in Iraq or harming Iraq so as to postpone his doom.

The masses of the people in Syria know and see through the media the extent of the symbiosis between the people and the leadership in Iraq. They see struggler Saddam Husayn touring every part of urban and rural Iraq, visiting factories, barracks, schools and the homes of citizens, talking and listening to the people, solving their problems, teaching them and learning from them. They compare between this laudable model and the other evil, hideous and oppressive model who remains isolated in his headquarters and does not leave it to meet with the people or to visit the cities and villages of Syria. No one among the people knows him and he knows no one among the people. He appears in public only at long intervals to make a speech to a small group of his followers in a closed hall or some other place. Al-Asad is afraid that his corrupt and sick situation will be further exposed among the people.

Hafiz al-Asad does not want to preserve Iraq's potentialities, as he claims. He has nothing to do with those capabilities because he happily accepts the humiliation of occupation and is not bothered by it. What scares him most is the emergence of Iraq's huge capabilities during the battle with Iran. That battle has demonstrated that Iraq is a major nationalist force, an organized, effective and mature force. Hafiz al-Asad is worried that the people in Syria and the Arab nation as a whole would come to know this, because the emergence of that power is a decisive indictment of his regime which tolerates the shame of occupation, claims to maintain a position of steadfastness and confrontation and collects billions without being able to develop an intrinsic power for Arab Syria. Such an intrinsic force would enable Syria to really confront aggression as Iraq has done in a few years by depending on its own capabilities without help from outside and without need for emaciated fronts and phony mergers such as Hafiz al-Asad's merger with Al-Qadhdhafi. Therefore, Hafiz al-Asad is willing to do anything to discredit that force. But since he has failed to do so, he was willing to do anything to destroy it. He allied himself with Khomeyni and he has recently collected a number of opportunist and trivial bands of people who had been rejected by the people of Iraq and turned them into a front dedicated to the overthrow of the revolutionary, popular regime in Iraq. But far from it! The overthrow of Iraq is the dream of imperialism, Zionism and little lackeys such as Al-Asad and Al-Qadhdhafi, but the revolution which millions of people have embraced with their hearts and minds cannot be brought down by

miserable attempts made by bands that have been repudiated by the people and dumped in the trash can of history.

Hafiz al-Asad is not bothered by the inherent contradiction in his alliance with the Khomeyni regime. He lies, distorts and falsifies history and he uses contracitory arguments to justify his alliance with Khomeyni in the hope that that other imposter can rescue him from Iraq's revolution. How preposterous! The magician has run out of tricks and the turbaned imposter now faces the end. Hafiz al-Asad knows this and he has therefore lost his nerves and began to act in a frantic manner which has given him away after he had tried for years to develop the image of a calm and moderate man.

Hafiz al-Asad wants to stay in Lebanon indefinitely not to maintain Lebanon's unity, integrity, security and stability but to control it and take the lead in partitioning it. Al-Asad's regime which has subjected Syria for years to minority rule as well as to tyranny, extortion and corruption, finds itself doomed. And because Hafiz al-Asad has steeped himself in criminality against the Arab people of Syria and against the Arab cause in general, he is playing the card of partitioning Lebanon as an aid in his efforts to partition Syria if he finally failed to rule all of Syria. Subsequently, he aligns himself with the isolationist right in Lebanon, overtly and covertly, impedes the emergence of a national unity government in Lebanon, prevents the central authority from exercising its responsibilities, explodes the situation whenever stability seems imminent, and alternately attacks and cajoles the Palestinian resistance and the Lebanese national movement in a continuing game of subversion so that the situation in Lebanon will remain under his control and prey to his designs.

Hafiz al-Asad aligned himself with Khomeyni to complement that game. Despite the outward contradiction between the nature of al-Asad's regime and that of Khomeyni's regime, the two regimes are in fact aligned in their drive to stir sectarian disputes and divisions and to keep fueling trouble in the region under different pretexts and guises.

The steadfastness of Arab, nationalist Iraq in the face of the aggression of Khomeyni's regime and his attempts to divide the region can only mean that Hafiz al-Asad's regime has been exposed and that the schemes of that regime will fail. Al-Asad is frantically supporting his ally, the Khomeyni regime, and in so doing he is sinking deeper and deeper in the mire of contradictions and irrational positions because he tries to camouflage his policies with patriotic, nationalist claims. But he has failed because the scandal is larger than him.

This is then what Hafiz al-Asad wants and what his schemes are. He is in accord with al-Qadhdhafi, that other saboteur who is stabbing the nation in the heart. The time for that kind of plotting is gone. Hafiz al-Asad, al-Qadhdhafi and Khomeyni have been exposed. That conspiring band cannot hide its plots or continue playing its game with impunity any longer. Saddam, with the sword of Al-Qadisiyah in his hand, is administering to its members the punishment of history in a nationalist battle that has unmasked falsehood and lit the way for the Arab nation in its search for freedom, unity and dignity.

9254

CSO: 4802

PHALANGIST LEADER DISCUSSES OBSTACLES TO NEW FORM OF GOVERNMENT

London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 28 Nov 80 p 14

[Interview with Bashir al-Jumayyil by Sami al-Haji: "We Are Hoping that Leaders Will Come Forth in the West Who Will Be Able To Negotiate Freely with Us"]

[Text] When Shaykh Bashir al-Jumayyil met me in his office in the building of the Phalangist Military Council, the Lebanese Front was about to publish "A Document of Fundamentals Pursuing the Reinforcement of Front Agencies." This was how the newspaper, AL-'AMAL, which speaks for the Phalangist party, referred to it. According to the newspaper, AL-AHRAR which usually articulates the policy of the National Liberals, this document is the one according to which "the Executive Committee, which oversees the implementation of the Front's political and military resolutions," was formed. On the strength of this document Shaykh Bashir and Duri Sham'un became members of the Lebanese Front: the former as commander of the Lebanese forces and the latter as the official responsible for the political orientation of these forces.

The Phalangist party was about to celebrate its 44th anniversary which coincides with the 37th anniversary of Lebanon's independence. This was a time when the party's political and military might made it one of the effective parties on the scene of Lebanese events.

In a casual conversation that preceded the interview which AL-HAWADITH conducted with Shaykh Bashir al-Jumayyil, AL-HAWADITH asked the commander of the Lebanese forces about the nature of the "surprise" which had been mentioned in rumors. It was said that "the Phalangists will announce their surprise on their anniversary, on Lebanon's Independence Day." Al-Jumayyil laughed and said, "This surprise exists only in the minds of those who are promoting it. On our part, we have no surprises, nor do we have anyone who will be surprised."

I told him, "What has become of the question of 'Ayn al-Rummanah?" He replied emphatically, "We are done with it completely." When we asked him to explain if anything specific had been revealed by the investigations to identify who was behind the incidents of the cars that had been

mined and exploded in the eastern section, al-Shaykh Bashir sighed before saying, "We have to endure this just as we did endure the long years of the war."

The written questions that AL-HAWADITH asked al-Shaykh Bashir revolved around the various subjects that were being considered in Lebanon. Among those subjects is that of the relationship between the Phalangists and the Liberals; the relationship between the Lebanese forces, the army and the government; the dialogue between the Phalangists and the Palestinians; and other subjects as well.

[Question] What was the outcome of your recent meeting with President Camille Sham'un, and why do you agree with him politically but not militarily?

[Answer] The agreement between me and His Excellency President Sham'un was total and comprehensive. We have always been guided by his instructions. During that meeting which took place on the 19th of this month, the final touches were placed on the structure within which the Lebanese forces will operate. Our agreement with President Sham'un has always been political and military. If occasionally there seemed to be a disagreement on the surface in the military area, such a disagreement was usually no more than a difference in point of view that was soon restored to a state of like-mindedness and harmony.

I want to assure everyone, by the way, that the Lebanese Front with all its agencies and its organizations stands as one, closely-knit group whose only objective is the victory of the Lebanese question.

[Question] Has the 7 July operation created for the state, the government, the Lebanese army and the eastern area the conditions for a federation?

[Answer] Using this term here and particularly in this question is quite unfortunate. Our position now is that of Lebanese citizens who succeeded in liberating a part of Lebanon from Palestinian and Syrian occupation and in rescuing it from the internal disintegration that has been threatening it. Today, those Lebanese citizens are looking forward to the day when all Lebanon will be liberated and rescued.

[Question] Can the new situation in 'Ayn al-Rummanah lead to an explosion between [that city] and the al-Shayyah area?

[Answer] The Lebanese Front, and that includes the Phalangists, [opposes] any measure that would bring back an atmosphere of war to any area of Lebanon. If there is aggression, however, we will respond regardless who the aggressor is.

[Question] Do you prefer the Yugoslav, the Swiss or the U.S. [model of] a federation and why?

[Answer] The Lebanese Front, and that includes the Phalangists, did not proclaim its preference for any specific federal system for the future. But the front did advocate the adoption of a system that would honor the pluralism of Lebanese society and would emanate from it.

Lebanon's future regime, whatever that might be, will be chosen by all the Lebanese people after they formulate it together. But this cannot take place in the presence of occupation [forces]. Occupation has paralyzed and does paralyze the will of the Lebanese people in the occupied areas. We are looking forward to the day when the will of the Lebanese people will be liberated so they can sit with us in a free atmosphere to choose the regime that they find suitable. Such a regime would not be imported as it is now; it would rather stem from Lebanese premises, and it would establish the reality of this homeland.

[Question] Do you expect new fighting to erupt in Lebanon between supporters and opponents of a federation?

[Answer] Let the enemies keep their hands off Lebanon and the Lebanese people will be all right.

[Question] Have you started a dialogue with the Palestinian Resistance about the possibility of creating a federation? How would you react if Yasir 'Arafat started a war?

[Answer] We reject totally [the proposition] that any foreigner would negotiate for a Lebanese group. A federation or any other system is a matter for the Lebanese people to determine among themselves.

Regarding how we would respond if Yasir 'Arafat were to start a war against us, we have already responded to that in practice since the Palestinian aggression on Lebanon, and especially since 13 April 1975.

[Question] How far has the process of unifying the Lebanese forces gone? Will the Lebanese forces become the government's army in the eastern area and the Lebanese army become the army for all Lebanon?

[Answer] It would be logical for the organization of the army to conform to the organization of the state. At the present time, however, we cannot talk about an army for the government in the eastern area and a Lebanese army for all of Lebanon. There is an obvious contradiction in those terms.

The Lebanese army, which believes in and is actually working for liberation, has to fan out all over Lebanon and become the only official army.

[Question] Why is it that there are officers in the army who are members of parties but there are no officers who are Phalangists?

[Answer] We have taken away the membership of anyone who joined the army ever since the establishment of the Phalangist party. We are fully convinced that any soldier, regardless of his rank, must be fully devoted

to his mission. He should have no other ties lest his military discipline and his loyalty to the state be tarnished by anything under the psychological, educational and national circumstances such as those which Lebanon has been and is experiencing.

Our society has not yet risen to the level of reconciling total loyalty to the homeland on the one hand and membership in a party and political division on the other. We hope that there will be no conflict in the future between absolute loyalty to the homeland and a soldier's [decision] to join a party to pursue a political life.

[Question] You are proclaiming the slogan of liberating all of Lebanon from the Palestinians and the Syrians. Will this take place before the establishment of a federation or does the federation eliminate the slogan?

[Answer] Although we have not yet chosen the system that is desirable for the Lebanon of the future--and as I said, the future system for Lebanon will be chosen by the Lebanese people themselves--I do fear that if a federal system is realized under occupation, the control of the occupier will become established more strongly and more deeply and the occupation would turn into settlement.

Therefore, there will be no new system for Lebanon before the liberation. If we were to suppose that a choice were to be made now for such a system, it should not be put into practice until after liberation.

[Question] After the command in the eastern area is unified, what parties in the western area do you consider qualified to engage in a dialogue with you?

[Answer] I am hoping that leaders who can talk and negotiate with us freely will come forth in the western area. The problem today is that both the Syrian and Palestinian occupation are oppressive and are not allowing the other Lebanese group to make its true feelings known.

[Question] You have taken the lion's share in the government of Shafiq al-Wazzan, but you have not given it adequate support. How are you helping the new government in its thrust?

[Answer] We are not accustomed to provide blind support or to oppose others blindly. The help we render to this government or to any other government, regardless of who are its members, will depend on how much that government helps itself. What I mean is that a government that promises liberation and works for it will have all our support and our help. But a government that under these circumstances is not ashamed of confining its work to routine business is a government that does not meet our expectations and does not constrain us.

[Question] Do you consider the Maronite sect the biggest victor in the Lebanese war?

[Answer] The biggest victor in this war is the Lebanese Resistance. It has gained victory despite the fact that people from near and far have come together to break up this homeland.

[Question] It has been said that the Arab deterrent forces fought on your side in the battle against the liberals.

[Answer] The 7 July Movement was a decision that the Lebanese forces themselves made without help, support or encouragement from anybody. They made the decision alone, and they executed it alone.

[Question] Were you engaged in a battle against the former U.S. administration, and do you believe that the elected U.S. administration will stop the war against the Maronite sect and continue it against the Phalangist command?

[Answer] We are all hoping that the new U.S. administration will understand the magnitude of the Lebanese question and its effect on the stability of this area.

[Question] How far has the dialogue between you and the Soviet Union gone? What is the position of the Soviet Union regarding the development of the Lebanese form [of government]? Are you forming a delegation to visit Moscow?

[Answer] This dialogue is still in the burgeoning stage. Therefore, we do not yet know what the Soviet Union's position is on developing the Lebanese form of government. We have not yet looked into forming a delegation to visit Moscow. In this regard we want to emphasize that we are trying to have good relations with everybody on the basis of support for the Lebanese question.

8592

CSO: 4802

OPTIONS FOR SOLUTION TO LEBANESE CRISIS CONSIDERED

Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic 29 Nov 80 pp 25-27

[Article by Ghassan Bayram: "Will Lebanon Choose To Become a Federation Instead of Maintaining Its Formula of Coexistence and Its Pact? The Lebanese Front Asks Moslem Leaders To Declare in Writing What Formula, What Lebanon and What System They Want To Have"]

[Text] A few days ago, Prime Minister Sa'ib Salam received a message that asked him the following questions:

"First, what are the practical steps that would make Moslems believe that a Moslem is a Lebanese citizen and not a second class citizen?

"Second, how can the Christian formula be removed from Lebanon without replacing it with a Moslem formula?

"Third, how can we give every Lebanese sect its full, uncurtailed rights?

"Please give us your opinion on these three subjects so that we can investigate the details."

Prime Minister Salam did not wish to respond to those questions in a clear, specific way. But he did make three observations which he deduced from the nature of the questions that were sent to him as one of the prominent Moslem politicians in Lebanon. Accordingly, the leaders of the Maronite Lebanese Front as well as those who revolve in the Front's orbit continue to believe that the Moslems who are qualified to engage in a debate with them are the traditional politicians who sustained and coexisted with the 1943 Pact that led to the birth of Lebanon's independence. This is a group [of Moslem politicians], most of whom can be found today in the Islamic Grouping. This group did not bear arms and did not participate in the fighting that took place during the Lebanese War. Prime Minister Sa'id Salam is one of them.

The first comment that Prime Minister Salam made to the first question was this: "There is then an acknowledgement of the fact that a Moslem feels that he is a second class citizen in Lebanon."

The second comment to the second question was this: "There is also an acknowledgment of the fact that the present form [of government] in Lebanon is Christian."

[In his response] to the third question Salam said, "The logical conclusion is to remove and correct the two conditions so that we would have a state of genuine coexistence wherein everybody will have equal rights and obligations."

Prime Minister Salam sent back his comments and expressed his willingness to express his opinion openly and clearly on the three suggestions but after the Christian command in the Lebanese Front acknowledged these facts that he had referred to in his comments. That is, [he wanted the Christian command to acknowledge] that the Lebanese Moslem was in fact a second class citizen; that Lebanon's form [of government] was Christian; and that correction can be effected by removing these two conditions that have been the source of the imbalance in the Lebanese form [of government] throughout Lebanon's 36 years of independence.

Prime Minister Salam chose not to reveal the name of the person from whom he had received this message. But its content and the political significance that was given to it affirm that the letter had been initiated by the political and religious Maronite leaders who are working in the framework of the Lebanese Front. It is believed that these questions were presented in one form or another to other Moslem leaders.

This initiative that was undertaken by an activist Christian group, which influences the course of events on the Lebanese scene, vis a vis another Moslem group assumes its major significance from the objective circumstances in which it took place. These are the present circumstances in which Lebanon finds itself standing at a critical stage of change that may tend to endorse the final separation between Lebanon and the 1943 Pact as well as the search for an alternative form [of government] which may very well be a federation.

Discussions about an alternative form [of government] of an alternative system under which the Lebanese people can coexist are not new. Several proposals have been made in this regard ever since the Lebanese war broke out. All of those proposals, however, were unilateral and partisan, and they found no support from any other Lebanese group since most groups rejected emphatically any proposals that deviated from the framework of a single Lebanon, whose territory and people would remain united under a free, democratic, central political system. The regime, under the leadership of President Ilyas Sarkis played a prominent fundamental role in rejecting any divisive proposals that included a federal form [of government] and a real partition.

The president of the republic betted many times on restoring an undivided Lebanon to its state prior to the eruption of the 1975 events. He also betted on introducing some reforms to the political and administrative system. The bet was primarily based on building a unified and a strong army that would reflect an undivided Lebanon. The president also betted on achieving a national reconciliation under suitable circumstances: sometimes he counted on achieving it through dialogue between the Lebanese parties, and sometimes he counted on achieving it through forming a government of activists and through other similar means as well.

These bets stood until President Sarkis decided to form a government of activists after setting down the indisputable conditions of a reconciliation that were accepted by almost everybody. President Sarkis charged Prime Minister Taqi al-Din al-Sulh with forming this government of activists.

Events are now affirming that when the president of the republic undertook his reconciliation initiative and subsequently his attempt to form a government of activists, he was merely gambling with his last card. He was compelled to do so by the premises and the views that were available to him. All these bore danger signals against the Lebanese situation remaining as it is because the expected developments in the area would undoubtedly hold Lebanon hostage to all future settlements.

This is what has actually begun to emerge. Not only has it become evident that the Lebanese president cannot make the Lebanese situation leap into an accord or an interim reconciliation among the Lebanese people because of foreign pressures and interventions, but it also became evident that the possibility of going back to a method of managing the crisis in the presence of the basic symbols of government organizations was no longer quite feasible or [even] possible.

Ever since President Sarkis formed a cabinet led by Prime Minister Shafiq al-Wazzan, developments in positions have emerged: some of those have been hidden and some have been evident. These developments created a deep disturbance in the Lebanese regime that caused it to lose its ability to take the initiative in some self-evident constitutional functions. This made the government's position ambivalent, keeping it waiting for the mercy of some foreign forces, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, paralyzing the Chamber of Deputies as the primary legislative and political power in the country.

Despite the fact that more than a month has gone by since the government was formed, the possibility that the matter may come up for a vote of confidence in the Chamber of Deputies was until the end of last week uncertain and unguaranteed. In fact, the reverse was the case since political and military forces continued to affirm that this matter would not come up at the Chamber of Deputies to make this government fully legal. These affirmations were made sometimes with the excuse that there was a Shi'ite representation problem and other times because of the problem of 'Ayn al-Rummanah and the outcome of that problem with the Phalangist party entering the area and the army leaving it.

Throughout the past week people in the government waited for the visit that was jointly made to Syria by delegations from the Palestinian Resistance, from the National Movement and from the Shi'ite Amal Movement. They were hoping that this visit to Damascus would bring about positive results that would cause positions to shift and set the government of al-Wazzan free.

Between waiting for Damascus to interfere to solve the problems--and hence, waiting for the delegations to return from the Syrian capital--and the constant effort to find a solution to the problem of the army in 'Ayn al-Rummanah, the days, or rather the hours during this waiting period, weighed heavily on the people in the government. They waited in an atmosphere which threatened that a total collapse would take place and that the delicate thread which still tied Lebanon to the hope of going back to unity would break.

Regardless of the fact that some foreign forces do not wish to drag Lebanon into a bottomless pit and a total collapse, but prefer rather to keep it on the verge of a collapse, a prominent factor continued to constitute a kind of safety valve. This was the mutual understanding and agreement that developed between the president of the republic and the new prime minister, on the other side of the coin. But the fear lingered that the agreement between the two leaders would break up, that Prime Minister al-Wazzan would at least be forced to resign and that the president of the republic would find himself facing new impossibilities that would prevent him from forming a new government.

Under circumstances such as those which Lebanon is experiencing at present, we must not think it improbable that Prime Minister al-Wazzan may be forced to resign. What would prevent this or the other agency from keeping Prime Minister al-Wazzan from leaving his home if he refuses to resign to accede to specific high-pressure methods? If Prime Minister Taqiy al-Din al-Sulh found himself compelled to turn down the offer to form a government of activists as a result of coercion or a certain threat, despite the agreement and the harmony that existed between him and the president, we should not think it unlikely that Prime Minister al-Wazzan will be subjected to the same threat.

So far, however, none of this has happened, and the president of the republic and the prime minister are still in agreement to resist and confront all the difficulties and to make all possible and reasonable sacrifices to save what can be saved.

At one of the recent business meetings that President Sarkis and Prime Minister al-Wazzan held a few days before the disciplinary measures against the army commander and some senior officers were issued as a result of their negligence which occurred in 'Ayn al-Rummanah, the two leaders spoke openly with each other about everything. The prime minister told President Sarkis, "I am part of the government. You and I are the government. It has been entrusted to us, and we will not allow this trust to be neglected. I will not allow myself to become engaged in political oneupmanship to achieve political and personal gains and victories. I was and I still am one of those people who are furthest from this method which I despise and totally reject especially when the interests and the destiny of the homeland are hanging in the balance."

Accordingly, Prime Minister al-Wazzan addressed the president of the republic and told him, "Your excellency, Mr President, I am asking you to help me personally in the following matters:

"First, I am asking you to interfere directly to restore the army to 'Ayn al-Rummanah.

"Second, I am asking you to interfere directly to solve the problem of Shi'ite representation even if it becomes necessary to ask one of the Shi'ite ministers to resign so another one can be appointed to appease the Amal Movement.

"Third, I am asking you to try to make the Lebanese position on the Arab Summit Conference lead to a Syrian agreement with the attempts that are being made to solve the problems that stand in the government's way. I am asking you to utilize the Lebanese position on the summit with the Syrians for that purpose."

President Sarkis was very open when he expressed his reservations about the army's return to 'Ayn al-Rummanah. He said that the matter must be studied with the military men before a final decision is made to determine whether that was possible or not and [if possible] how it can be done.

With regard to the second request pertaining to Shi'ite representation, President Sarkis told his prime minister that he would not allow himself as president to ask a minister to resign.

The president approved the third subject, and he immediately asked Minister of Foreign Affairs Fu'ad Butrus to take action on the attempt to make the Lebanese position on the summit conference, which is congruous with the Syrian position, yield positive results that would benefit the government's situation.

In addition, the other matter about which the president of the republic and the prime minister were in agreement was that of taking disciplinary action against those responsible in the army command for the negligence that occurred in 'Ayn al-Rummanah. They agreed to move immediately to confirm an acceptable army organization decree.

Prime Minister al-Wazzan's pursuit of this matter stemmed from his belief that disciplinary measures against the army commander, the chief of staff and some responsible senior officers would put an end to political campaigns against the regime and the government. This relatively high price would strengthen the government's position and would make it easier for the government to reach the Chamber of Deputies. Furthermore, these measures, along with confirmation of an army organization decree, would end the controversy surrounding the army and its identity and would pave the way for correcting its image with the public.

But the attempt to get out of the problem of 'Ayn al-Rummanah with these disciplinary measures hurled the regime or rather the country into a more serious problem. This occurred when the army commander rejected those disciplinary measures. He was joined in this by officers of the army command--those who were included in the measures as well as those who were not--who declared their solidarity with their commander. The army commander considered these measures illegal because the law does not give the minister of defense jurisdiction to take any disciplinary measures.

This position that the army command and the officers took created an atmosphere of legal confrontation between the political and the military authorities. Several fears emerged that this confrontation may develop into a decisive stage that would open the door to several possibilities. These varied from a fear that the confrontation may develop politically and having to face one of two cases: either the removal of the command or a bloodless coup, or another movement that would threaten the unity of the army.

The only thing that curbed these fears and made it unlikely that this confrontation would develop was the president of the republic and the total loyalty he commands among the army command and the army officers who would be prepared to respond to the decisive position that he would ultimately take.

Conflicting political reactions soon emerged and began to divert the matter from its procedural and legal course. When some activist parties of the National Movement considered the disciplinary measures that were taken to be inadequate and that stopping at those measures constituted a cover-up and an obliteration of the facts, the Lebanese Front hinted, but did not officially declare, that what had happened was a dangerous precedent. The Lebanese Front suggested that the prime minister had yielded to the extortion of leftists and their Palestinian allies--these are the expressions that the front used. There was news that the Lebanese Front was secretly preparing to declare a position that would be tantamount to a response to that situation which had developed.

For some time people in government and some political leaders were becoming increasingly convinced that it was no longer possible to maintain the Lebanese situation according to the formula that is now and has been in effect since 1943, since the birth of independence. This impossibility requires that an understanding be reached on an alternative form [of government] that can be adopted until the crisis in the area comes to an end and the Lebanese people find themselves in a situation where they would be able to decide upon a formula for their regime.

Stemming from this belief, secret meetings and encounters have been taking place for some time. These were interspersed with investigations into the new form [of government]. In a statement he made to the press Mr Walid Jumblatt, president of the National Movement and the Socialist party referred to the subject of a federal system when he said, "If the alternative form [of government] is inevitably the federal form that is being proposed, there is no objection. But we must know what kind of federation they want."

When this statement was made by Mr Jumblatt, some circles expressed their astonishment at the reasons that would make the leader of the National Movement and the socialist leader propose this matter. But the reason for the astonishment disappeared when other facts were revealed. The most prominent of these facts was that the search for an alternative form [of government] to the present Lebanese regime had actually begun and that the federal form of government was at the center of these investigations.

It was then revealed that secret meetings had been held in the presidential palace and that some of them had been attended by some prominent leaders in the Phalangist party. Among them was al-Shaykh Bashir al-Jumayyil. It was said that the questions that had been directed to some Moslem leaders, and especially Prime Minister Salam, constituted a persuasive measure [to ensure] the participation of various forces in this dialogue.

A few days ago the Lebanese people saw on their television screens a Palestinian-Phalangist debate between the director of the PLO office in Beirut, Mr Shafiq al-Hut and Mr Karim Baqradi, member of the Political Office of the Phalangist party. It has been learned that the state had encouraged this debate which also had the blessings of PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat and Phalangist party president, al-Shaykh Pierre al-Jumayyil.

Although this television debate had been advertised as a discussion on Arab summit conferences, the discussion soon turned to the Lebanese problem. The essence of what Mr Shafiq al-Hut said was to ask the Lebanese people to come to an understanding and an agreement because they had no other choice to save their homeland. But the essence of what Mr Baqraduni said was to call upon the president of the republic to draw up a new national charter that would be based on a federal system so that the Lebanese provinces would have some kind of autonomy, but they would ultimately belong to the Federal State of Lebanon which would have one president, one army, one currency and one foreign policy. Mr Baqraduni concluded by saying that President Sarkis had to try to leave his successor a new state instead of turning the government over to a new president in 1982.

Karim Baqraduni was not merely making a suggestion when he made that statement, as much as he was reflecting the real deliberations that were taking place behind the scenes in official and political circles. Accordingly, he was reflecting the position of his party which thinks that adopting a federal system at the present time would be the best solution to the existing Lebanese situation and would be the best alternative to the state of dissolution and fragmentation that Lebanon is experiencing.

All the information that is available on this subject is raising the question now about whether or not President Ilyas Sarkis has given up the hope of the possibility of restoring Lebanon to its pre-crisis condition.

The fact is that the information [that is available] reflects two conflicting points of view that respond to this question.

The first point of view states that all the attempts that had been made to achieve a Lebanese reconciliation and arrive at a political solution to the Lebanese crisis had reached a dead end. What happened with regard to the government of al-Wazzan, what happened to the army in 'Ayn al-Rummanah and the complications that developed therefrom led many people in government and politics to choose between one of two matters.

The first choice is to maintain the current situation in Lebanon--that is, the fighting, the dissolution and the divisiveness--until the Middle East crisis comes to an end and a solution to the Palestinian problem is found, no matter how long it takes.

The second choice is to look for an alternative to the current situation that would be acceptable to the Lebanese people. In this case a federation would be the most suitable system because it would preserve the unity of Lebanese territory with its current international borders and, accordingly, the unity of the state as a framework for a kind of autonomy that Lebanese groups can pursue, each within its own province or area. This temporary form [of government] is to be reconsidered after the crisis in the area and the Palestinian problem are solved. In the context of these solutions the Lebanese people can agree either to go back to the old form [of government] or hold on to the new form, especially if it proves to be successful.

The second point of view states that if deliberations about an alternative form [of government] are taking place, they are taking place so as to make all the alternatives available in case any developments occur that would bring about the ultimate collapse of the state and the regime of Lebanon.

Thoughts about being on one's guard for such possibilities did actually begin when the regime and its people seemed incapable of launching the new government, which was formed despite its ordinary quality and despite the fact that it was formed to avoid any vacuum and to take care of the affairs of government and the business of the state. The people of the regime found that the initiative, or most of it, was no longer in their hands; it had moved to other hands. These thoughts had begun seriously with the emergence of complications that were produced by the events of 'Ayn al-Rummanah. These events had put the destiny of all the government's organizations--and at their forefront is the army organization--to a test. Therefore, when the condition of the regime and of its people goes back eventually to that which it has reverted to, it becomes natural to think of new alternatives to preserve the survival of that homeland instead of assuming the position of a spectator watching a state of decline and collapse.

This second point of view may be the one that is more logical. But it remains an established fact that a decision in any direction or on any position depends upon a meeting between Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and Lebanese President Ilyas Sarkis. Low-key preparations for this meeting are being made.

Some would prefer to have the Lebanese-Syrian summit meeting occur later after the directions which the new U.S. administration will take to solve the Middle East question would have begun to emerge. This would help settle the subject of the future of the Lebanese regime and the future formula for coexistence. It would then become possible to say whether or not the 37th anniversary of Lebanon's independence had seen the last of the coexistence and reconciliation formula which had brought about this independence and whether or not the search for an alternative form [of government] had begun.

8592
CSO: 4802

LIBYA

BRIEFS

FINNISH FIRM MAPPING CONTRACT--The Finnish company Finmap Oy has received an additional order from Libya. The company will begin to plan land use for the so-called Fezzan area up to the year 2000. Finmap's agreement is already the second such agreement this year. The value of the agreement is 24 million marks. The engineering firm Kaista & Sebbas, Finmap's sister company, will be responsible for making maps of the Fezzan area and plans for its 57 cities. The Fezzan area is twice the size of Finland, but only 350,000 people live there. The area is in the middle of the Sahara desert, but part of it can be made suitable for agriculture. It is intended that the future of the area will be based on the significant amounts of water to be found underground. After this new agreement, Finmap plans to map almost all of Libya. Last year the enterprise made a 20-million mark agreement to plan land use for the Al Khaliij area. This includes extensive mapping of deserts in addition to plans for 13 cities. Almost all of Libya's oil fields are located in this area. Together the Fezzan and Al Khaliij areas make up over 80 percent of the area of Libya. Finmap and Kaista & Sebbas have been particularly successful in recent years in the Arab countries. The enterprise has permanent centers in Tripoli, Libya, and in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. [Text] [Helsinki HELSINGIN SANOMAT in Finnish 10 Dec 80 p 34] 9611

CSO: 3107

SAHARA IS MOROCCAN, COOPERATION OFFICIAL INSISTS

Rabat L'OPINION in French 17 Nov 80 pp 1, 4

[Interview with Secretary of State for Cooperation Abdelhaq Tazi, by Ahmed Al Fadili and Fatima Belaraj]

[Text] What is the situation following Morocco's rejection of the UN Sahara resolution? If that is the first question we put to Secretary of State for Cooperation Abdelhaq Tazi, who took part with the Moroccan delegation in the work of the UN Fourth Commission on the northwest African conflict, it is also no doubt the question asked by every Moroccan citizen. Many things have been said and many interpretations made. In order to obtain an exact idea of the progress of the deliberations, and of the Moroccan position after the Fourth Commission's vote, we contacted Mr Abdelhaq Tazi, who was good enough to respond to our questions, which follow:

[Question] How does the situation appear following rejection by Morocco of the UN resolution on the Sahara?

[Answer] Before responding to that question I would like to refute certain untruths which surprised me on my return to Morocco, and which I read in certain press commentaries. As you know, I was in New York before, during, and after the Fourth Commission vote, and for that reason I can state to you, as I already did after the vote, that the big loser in the UN is not Morocco, but in the end Africa. Indeed, the resolution co-authored by Morocco together with other African and Arab countries is not one which reflects the Moroccan thesis, or Moroccan rights to the recovered Sahara, but it is a resolution which in fact should have been that of the OAU Committee of Wise Men. It is a resolution which should have been offered by that committee, and which was, in principle, to have passed by consensus. If the members of the ad hoc committee did not present it as such, the responsibility for rejection is entirely theirs. What I can tell you is that Morocco has demonstrated to the world, and particularly to Africans, its total availability in the search for a peaceful process within the African

family which, while safeguarding its higher interests, will put an end to the tension artificially created and maintained by Algeria in the northwest. Moreover, and to the contrary of what has been asserted, Morocco has followed a policy of constant presence at the UN forum.

As you know, when the Fourth Commission convenes it is an ordinary delegate, and not the permanent representative, who attends. Now, in our case, there were present in New York the Minister of State himself, who arrived there on Aid Day itself, the Secretary of State for Cooperation, in addition to the delegations of the 10 organizations which have supported the Sahara's return to the motherland, and which also went to New York to make their voices heard. Thus there was by no means, as has been wrongly asserted, any policy of the empty chair. Morocco was present and properly occupied its seat. I likewise confirm that all 20 delegation members, who worked as one man, mobilized themselves to make other UN delegations aware of the soundness of Morocco's position, and to convince them of the bilateral nature of our conflict with Algeria and the purely African character of the resolution offered by certain countries, among them Morocco.

That much having been said parenthetically, I would like to emphasize that Morocco, by its action at the UN, has confirmed its act of faith in OAU efforts, and has demonstrated its goodwill in wishing to see this bilateral conflict resolved in a context of African solidarity and brotherhood within the ad hoc committee of the African organization. Morocco, which has spared no effort in that direction, will continue to strive for peace within the framework of our regional organization, and on the basis of its vested rights and the defense of its territorial integrity.

We Have Won the Procedural Battle

I wish also to point out that prior to and at the time of the vote there was a very hard procedural battle, which was led with customary bad temper, and against all logic, by Algeria. Victories in that procedural battle were won by Morocco on three occasions during the last 2 days of the voting.

The struggle irrefutably confirmed, in the eyes of all delegates, the bilateral nature of the conflict with Algeria. The latter threw all its weight into the battle--its own and that of the countries traditionally aligned with it either by interest or ideology. Algeria lost that battle, and that is something I wish to be known in Morocco. For the defeat has caused that country, and its representative who claims to be a jurist, to lose the prestige they coveted in that field. Finally, it was not a mere joust of honor, for we prevented Algeria from using its usual majority to amend our resolution by introducing notions unacceptable to Morocco, which would have allowed Algeria to bring two Algerian resolutions to a vote under our nose, with the consequences that could have resulted. Thus the Moroccan delegation won a victory by causing those maneuvers to fail.

Finally, I would like to add that Algeria, thanks to the action of the Moroccan delegation, had to introduce into its own resolution all the philosophy contained in that co-authored by Morocco, in the sense that it introduced whole paragraphs on the action of OAU, the Committee of Wise Men, and peaceful settlements by the authority of OAU and its ad hoc committee. It also introduced amendments. For example, in its own resolution, it pretended that the so-called Polisario was the representative of the Saharan populations. It had to eliminate that pretension to representativity and legitimacy by the Polisario as the sole representative of the populations and as a belligerent. To sum up, the resolution finally passed by Algeria and its automatic majority is but a routine resolution like last year's, but one still more watered down this year by amendments introduced thanks to the action of the Moroccan delegation. Its influence does not exceed the area of its own vote, for as you know, no force or organization in the world can impose on Morocco a solution contrary to its higher interests. Consequently, Morocco being determined to defend its vested interests, national rights, and territorial integrity, no more resolution--still less an Algerian one--will change the minds of 20 million Moroccans.

[Question] You have spoken of Morocco's goodwill and disposition to resolve the problem of the northwest African conflict. Does that mean Morocco is prepared to make concessions?

[Answer] In discussions there are always mutual concessions, but there are irrevocable positions, as I have just said. The Sahara was recovered by the Moroccan people following the Green March. For all time and since Morocco has existed, Moroccans feel, like the air they breathe, that the Sahara is the natural continuity of the north of their country and has been for centuries, and that consequently it is a part of their country. It is inadmissible that we should enter into discussions outside this fundamental truth felt by Moroccans.

[Question] You have also spoken of the resolution which unfortunately was not passed, of which Morocco was a co-author. That resolution is known to have provided for certain measures which Morocco has always opposed, such as the organization of a referendum, an immediate cease-fire, and others. Now, then, did it happen that Morocco consented to co-author that resolution?

Self-determination is Already a Fact

[Answer] There is a search for peace, there are discussions, and we are not against them. As for results, it is the talks that will bring them about. The Freetown recommendation has not yet been officially transmitted to His Majesty the King by President Sllaka Stevens.

That recommendation must in principle be submitted to the summit of the heads of state and government at Nairobi next July, and they must have their last word. Things are still at the stage of transmission of the resolution

and of its study by the summit. But we can even now say that we accept the cease-fire in the sense that we ourselves are the objects of aggression. As for the referendum, we have answered that the populations have already acted for their own self-determination, but that we are not against a verification of that self determination.

[Question] Is not the UN violating its own charter by substituting itself for the OAU in an African problem when, as is known, that charter provides that this UN decision shall be made in coordination with regional organizations?

The Spirit and Charter of the UN Have Been Flouted

[Answer] Indeed, the resolution co-authored by Morocco recalled resolution 4.21 of 9 November 1979 regarding cooperation between the UN and OAU. In consequence the resolution offered was entirely in the direction of cooperation between the two international organizations. Even more than that, there is the UN charter which stipulates that settlement of international differences must be sought by recourse to regional organizations. Consequently we were fully within the bounds of UN legitimacy when we presented such a resolution, and hence in my view the delegates who voted against that resolution in a way flouted the spirit and charter of the UN.

[Question] Mr Minister, what are prospects for possible negotiations with Algeria?

There Have Been No Negotiations

[Answer] There has been much talk recently of negotiations with Algeria. What I can assert is that to our knowledge there have been no negotiations. The behavior of the Algerian delegate and the ill humor he has shown with regard to our country throughout his remarks do not permit us to say that there are negotiations at present. But in the future, I repeat, Morocco will always be open to discussions with Algeria, the principal country concerned, for it is Algeria which is committing aggression against us. From its territory leave the hordes of mercenaries in its pay. They are enrolled by Algerians who arm and shelter them in the refugee camps of Tindouf, which are in truth centers of ideological brainwashing against Morocco and its territorial **[integrity]**.

[Question] Several fraternal and friendly countries have offered their mediation in the northwest African conflict. Thus there has been talk of Saudi, Tunisian, and even Senegalese mediation at one time. What exactly is the situation?

Morocco Must Defend Its Vested Rights

[Answer] What can be said is that those mediation attempts fizzled out because the Algerians proved adamant and showed not the slightest initiative

or good will in responding to them. It is always an unhappy sight to see brother countries harm themselves, and certain of them thought it necessary to intervene in order to stop this unjust war waged against us by Algeria. But it takes two to discuss. Morocco is ready, but up to now Algeria has not been. So what we can conclude is that so long as Algeria has not accepted mediation or agreed to discussions on the basis of the principles mentioned above, Morocco must defend itself and its vested rights with all the energy the situation demands.

[Question] What of Mauritania's neutrality in the conflict?

[Answer] If we analyze the vote at the UN, we note that Mauritania voted for the Algerian resolution and abstained on that of Morocco. So draw your own conclusion.

[Question] What is your view, Mr Minister, of the new Libyan position on the Saharan problem following Qadhdhafi's direct intervention in Chad?

Qadhdhafi Could Make Problems for Algeria if Occasion Offers

[Answer] Many totally illogical intentions are imputed to Libya: Qadhdhafi is said to dream of a "Saharan Islamic Republic," but with Libya no forecasts of any kind can be made. All we know is that Libya is financing the war waged by Algeria against Morocco.

[Question] In your opinion, is not Qadhdhafi's role being somewhat exaggerated?

[Answer] Certainly Qadhdhafi is interfering in all directions. He is practically everywhere, and he is squandering the riches of his country in the wrong way throughout the world. He is found a little bit everywhere. He intervenes in Chad as he does in Uganda or in the Central African Republic, but his interventions have always been fiascos.

[Question] What can be said of his latest statements on the Tuaregs?

[Answer] I think he wants to busy himself with all problems concerning the Tuaregs. He wants to make problems for adjoining countries, and that is a pretext. If the chance offers, he could even create problems for Algeria.

[Question] Besides, there has been talk on that subject, that is, the western press has spoken of a certain drawing back. If you like, it is said that Algeria is trying to keep its distance vis-a-vis Qadhdhafi?

[Answer] It is difficult for me to answer that, but if we look at results on the ground, it does not seem to me that such an evolution exists.

[Question] Mr Minister, what is the status of cooperation between Morocco and its African partners?

[Answer] Morocco tries, within its means--which are small compared to those of other countries, and especially oil-producing ones--to assist African countries weaker than itself. I think that particularly in the field of leader training Morocco is making a worthy effort to provide its African brothers with the instruments of education and training it has made for itself during 25 years of independence. The presence of 1,600 African students in Morocco--and their number is ever growing--shows the effort made in this domain. In others as well our country is seeking to meet stated needs, as in agriculture, health, or education, by sending experts to those countries to aid fraternal and friendly governments in solving development problems. Judging from reactions which have reached us, I think Morocco is on the right path, and that it is engaged in carrying out a policy of ever-growing cooperation, which I hope will once again respond to the needs expressed by fraternal and friendly countries.

6145

CSO: 4400

FOREIGN MINISTER ASSESSES PARIS, MOSCOW, SOFIA VISITS

Rabat L'OPINION in French 18 Nov 80 pp 1-2

[Interview with Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation M'Hamed Boucetta, by Ahmed Al Fadili]

[Text] Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation M'Hamed Boucetta last week returned from a long trip which led him successively to France, the Soviet Union, and Bulgaria.

In the course of that trip the chief of Moroccan diplomacy led our delegations to major intergovernmental commissions with France, the Soviet Union, and Bulgaria, and had conversations with responsible officials of those countries concerning questions of common interest as well as major current international problems.

In the interview which he was pleased to grant us, the minister evaluates those conversations, evokes the prospects for Moroccan relations with those countries, comments on the evolution of the Saharan question in the light of his discussions in the three capitals visited, and reiterates Morocco's position on numerous current problems.

The minister particularly states that he met with great understanding with regard to our national cause, notably on the part of Soviet leaders, and considers that the USSR is prepared to strive for a peaceful solution of the conflict in northwestern Africa.

The text of the Boucetta interview follows:

[Question] Mr Minister, you have just visited Paris, Moscow, and Sofia, where you led Moroccan delegations in the deliberations of major joint commissions with France, the Soviet Union, and Bulgaria. Can you give us an evaluation of those three meetings?

[Answer] The three meetings, as you know, were held as sessions of the major intergovernmental commissions of those countries and Morocco. The object was, of course, to take stock of Moroccan relations with France, the USSR, and Bulgaria in the economic as well as the cultural sphere, and also to exchange viewpoints on international and bilateral political questions. In general, it can be said that the outcome of the three meetings is positive, since in each of the fields I have just mentioned it was possible to reexamine those problems which had been in abeyance. Certain of them have been resolved, and a calendar has been established for examination and solution of those not dealt with on this occasion.

Concerning France, you know that the volume of economic and commercial exchanges is quite considerable, and that in the cultural domain French aid and assistance to Morocco likewise remain considerable in terms of cooperation as well.

I can therefore state that all problems have been examined so as to make for useful and fruitful cooperation between our two countries.

Thus, as regards the sending of professors, or the problem of Moroccan students in France, it was possible to find adequate solutions to facilitate Morocco's task and help it solve its educational and teaching problems, particularly at the higher level.

As for economic and commercial exchanges, protocols now regulate product exchanges, and the level of cooperation between Morocco and France is at present excellent.

We particularly explained to our French partners that an effort must be made in the field of investment, the more so since we are about to launch our 5-year plan, which includes a number of ambitious projects, all requiring French financial as well as technical assistance, and since we are about to make important modifications in our investments code.

All these factors were examined within the commission, and you could gather from the final communique approved by the Franco-Moroccan intergovernmental commission that many points were resolved, notably those relating to short-term cooperation, that is, during the coming year.

We also exchanged views on political problems, notably that relating to the tension prevailing in our region, and consequently in the Sahara. We therefore exposed anew on this occasion our view of the problem and its evolution, principally at the African level. I can thus state on this subject that we noted great understanding on the part of French officials, the more so since the latter perfectly realize that for Morocco the question is one of finally achieving its territorial integrity, and that the efforts we are putting forth for the reestablishment of peace and concord in north Africa constitute an essential element of our overall policy.

Concerning the Soviet Union, it must be recalled that our relations with that country, having gone through a stage of considerable development, had reached a point where a number of questions required study, notably those relating to application of the broad agreement on development of the Mescala mineral deposits. Thus all difficulties have been smoothed out, and the geological, mining, and structural study for that project will be undertaken within the next few weeks, in view of the complete agreement reached by our two delegations. Consequently, Moroccan-Soviet cooperation in this field will shortly reach a considerable level of development, which will permit resumption of the normal pace of exchanges and cooperation between our two countries.

Regarding trade relations, this problem was also examined, and we note that the Soviet Union remains a major buyer of Moroccan products, notably plums.

I also had occasion, while in Moscow, to exchange views on political questions, particularly with Andrei Gromyko, to whom I explained anew our position on the Saharan problem, stating that for us this question--which inspires the unanimity of the whole Moroccan people with its king--is one which is essential, indeed vital, and explains the will and determination of Morocco to settle it on terms which will complete and safeguard our territorial integrity. I can say that as regards the Soviet Union, and apart from positions it had adopted in recent years, a better understanding is emerging, which of course needs to be strengthened by continued exposition and by assiduous and constant contacts. We have also noted on the Soviet side a better approach to the problem and the factors involved.

Numerous problems were likewise examined with Bulgarian officials, notably those inherent in trade relations and experimentation, for example in the agricultural field. Thus the project prepared by ODI is now under study by the Bulgarians, which will certainly give a new impulse to exchanges between Morocco and Bulgaria in the fields of agriculture and stock raising, as well as to exchanges concerning experimentation conducted with much success in Bulgaria relating to development of mineral resources such as lignites, phosphates, schists, and several ores. I must say that as a whole, relations with all these countries must be developed, for Morocco still needs to draw on the experience of others in several domains, just as it needs to develop its trade relations, and to do so in such a manner that these will be mutually advantageous to itself and its partners.

[Question] Apart from the purely technical deliberations of the joint commissions, you had political discussions with French, Soviet, and Bulgarian officials. Can you indicate the broad lines taken by those discussions and the impressions you gathered from them?

[Answer] As I have just said, one of the major problems I approached with the leaders of those countries was the Saharan question. Quite simply because it is a problem of capital importance to Morocco, and one for whose explanation a continuous effort must be made, notably in countries with

whom we maintain cooperative relations. It is thus a question of demonstrating to everyone that Morocco has but recovered territories formerly colonized and despoiled, and for whose liberation the Moroccan people still accepts any sacrifice. The question is also one of recalling and demonstrating to all that Morocco, in recovering its territories, has never deviated, even in the slightest, from international legality, both during the armed struggle and at the time when it was necessary to resort to other means and processes. It might well be said that it is by scrupulous respect for the norms and precepts of the law of nations and international law that Morocco was finally able to make good its rights, notably through recourse to negotiation for conclusion of an agreement with the administering power--in this instance Spain--and through expression of the will of the peoples concerned.

In the process, it was necessary to explain that if tension exists in the region, that is mainly because of the aggressions which continue to be directed against Morocco, which place it in a position of legitimate defense and consequently authorize it to repel those aggressions, to consolidate its gains, and thus to ask the support and understanding of others.

Such, then, are the terms in which we have explained our position and analyzed, for the benefit of our various interlocutors, the evolution of the situation in relation to regional organizations, particularly the OAU, and the sense of Morocco's acceptance of the latter's recommendations tending to put an end to tension in the region.

Other problems were also raised whose importance to Morocco henceforth escapes no one, such as the Mid East conflict and particularly the Palestinian question. On that point we have once again reiterated our positions of principle, and I must say that we noted, in the three countries visited, a complete identify of views. Thus, everywhere we went, we reached agreement on the fact that no viable solution to the Middle East crisis can be found without recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, represented by the PLO, to create its independent and sovereign state in its despoiled territory; without Israeli evacuation of Arab territory occupied by force; and without an overall solution of the Mid East problem.

Another problem, and one of pressing immediacy, was the subject of conversations, to wit, the conflict between Iraq and Iran which is troubling international relations. This was the occasion for us once again to explain our position, to deplore that conflict and, as His Majesty the King had done immediately upon the outbreak of hostilities, to launch a renewed appeal to those responsible, in both Iraq and Iran, for the cessation of this war which neither serves the interests of the belligerents nor those of the Third World, nor, more particularly, those of the Palestinian cause, given the position of the two belligerents.

Thus, while deploring this conflict and calling for a cessation of hostilities, we have supported the historic rights of Iraq, for we consider that no leonine, unbalanced, or unequal settlement could long last, or permanent-

ly guarantee the status quo, and that unless it is accepted by all parties it is fated to be only temporary, and consequently to be a constant threat to peace and to relations between the countries signing it.

[Question] You have just stated, Mr Minister, that you met with great understanding on the part of responsible Soviet officials, notably with regard to our national cause. Can we infer from that a possible readiness by the Moscow leaders to bring pressure on those of their friends in the region who support our aggressors, or at least to moderate their attitude on the north-west African conflict?

[Answer] In that regard the Soviets take the position that it is necessary at all costs to seek a political solution to the conflict at the regional level. They are thus prepared to support all efforts to that end. This accords perfectly with our own viewpoint, to wit, that if there must be discussions aimed at putting an end to the conflict, they can take place only between the principal interested parties, in this instance Algeria and Morocco. We likewise explained to the Soviet leaders that we are still the victims of aggression, and that in consequence this aggression must cease prior to the inception of any dialogue or negotiations. We also reiterated that with regard to our territorial integrity, no solution could be found which did not take into account this essential element. We were thus able to note that the Soviets' approach to the problem, and their major wish, is that its solution should be found within the African framework. The Soviet leaders confirmed to us on this occasion--and this time very clearly--what they had always told us in the past, to wit, that they wish no escalation in the region, and I hope they will act to that end.

[Question] Moroccan diplomacy has been accused, particularly in recent times, of inertia, incompetence, inaction, slackness, and the like. How would you respond?

[Answer] The charge is a bit vague. Of course, everyone is free to think and say what he likes, since we are in a country which respects freedom of expression. But even freedom of expression, like all things, has limits. Even in the case of an opposition, it should be--I won't say completely objective, for it's difficult to be objective when one is in opposition--but at least not stray too far from reality and real facts. Diplomacy in our day is not what it was in the 19th century, that is, an enterprise conducted by people in frock coats and black ties; it is the work of all the people, men and women, young and not so young, career diplomats, or plain members of labor, political, youth, or other organizations.

So, as regards the Foreign Ministry in particular, I think that what has been done this year is a considerable achievement, which has consisted mostly of extensive campaigns of explanation, of heightening awareness, and of correcting errors into which many countries had been led through mendacious and mystifying propaganda.

Now, it takes time to correct such errors and reestablish truth. And that is exactly what has been done this year by the various delegations which have traveled the world, and particularly Africa, through the contacts they established at all levels, and through the campaign of explanation which they conducted tirelessly everywhere in order to carry conviction into the field, whether at international conferences, general assemblies, seminars-- wherever the problem could be raised and the cause of Morocco heard, and this always at Moroccan initiative. It would take too long to give an exhaustive account of all that has been accomplished in this field, but I can say that even a relatively impartial and objective analysis would attest to a considerable effort. It remains now to pursue that effort without letup. Diplomacy is an activity in which results do not show themselves from day to day. It is a long term work of perseverance. It is first of all the expression of certain principles and positions. Regarding the fundamental cause and the major problem which are the concern, I am convinced, of every Moroccan, our positions have always been forcefully asserted, and no laxity has been noted in our action. But that action is not limited to the defense of our cause and our rights. We remain mobilized as well for the defense of other just causes, such as that of Palestine, which we have always defended with the same strength and vigor we bring to the defense of our own. Thus all conferences and meetings which have taken place in Morocco, most of them at a high level and presided by His Majesty the King, have been occasions for Morocco to confirm its positions and principles and to reaffirm its commitments concerning the Palestinian and Arab cause.

More generally, Moroccan diplomatic action through international organizations has always tended to reaffirm our principles and positions on the various problems troubling the world.

It is indeed the duty of everyone to take account of the fact that all that has been done, and continues to be done in the sphere of diplomacy in fact consists of action to make up for time lost and delays accumulated over a period of years. These were gravely prejudicial to our cause and allowed our adversaries to exploit the void thus created, gaining advantages by making considerable efforts, spending fabulous sums, and conducting an outrageous propaganda campaign unhappily based on nothing but lies and fallacious propositions. To correct the course and restore a modicum of order in all this now requires much faith and conviction, and I can state that everything that has been done was done with a broad faith and much conviction.

[Question] How do you perceive the evolution of the situation in the Maghreb in the light of the recent deliberations of the Fourth Commission of the UN, and in that of the American election results?

[Answer] The future depends first and above all, as I have just said, on our ability to make everyone understand, precisely and absolutely, that the problem for us is one of territorial integrity, and to leave no doubt on

that subject. In other words, the question is one of exposing the problem and getting it admitted under all its facets, and with all its components.

So, for example, the hearing given to the true representatives of the Saharan populations at the OAU and UN, at their last sessions, is an eminently positive step and one directly in line with the policy I have just defined. For our adversaries have long counted on the ostensibly representative character and the presumed legitimacy of what is called the Polisario, though it is nothing of the sort, and though the authentic representatives of the Saharan provinces have expressed their position with force and conviction, and have demonstrated to the entire world that they remain attached to their Moroccan character and are prepared to accept any sacrifice so that those provinces remain Moroccan. These elements of explanation, which moreover are relatively recent, have been considered by all our interlocutors with much interest. True, the result cannot be immediately perceived; it surely will be in the weeks and months to come.

As regards the results of the American elections, it is still too early to make a pronouncement on that. But generally speaking the position of the United States on the Saharan problem is known: it is one of strict neutrality, and of course we ask nothing more, only hoping that the new administration will at least adhere to the same attitude.

[Question] In your opinion, can the Saharan question still be treated on the African level, after the vote on the OAU resolution?

[Answer] Certainly it can only be treated on the African level, and that no matter what resolutions are adopted at the UN.

It is, however, regrettable that the resolution co-authored by Morocco, and which was entirely in the African orientation, was fought by our adversaries, who wished only to spread and falsify the debate. What we have done this year at the UN is essentially focused on affirmation of the problem's African character. It must be said, however, that we did not have enough time for our efforts and our explanation to reach everyone.

You recall that the meeting of the Wise Mens' Committee at Freetown was held in mid-September, and that the UN debate started less than a week later. Consequently, it is my personal view that this resolution, which best embodied the African spirit and was adopted by 40 countries out of 41, in itself constitutes a great asset and a great result, in that it attests to the awareness which has come to many countries.

We of course regretted the lapse of certain countries which, because of their absence or because their delegates did not yet have sufficient understanding of the problem in all its details, so acted that the resolution could not be adopted. The resolution nonetheless best reflects the scope and spirit in which the problem must be resolved, that is, in the African context.

[Question] What, in your opinion, will be the repercussions of the Libyan intervention in Chad on the evolution of the situation in the Maghreb and Africa?

[Answer] Uneasiness already extends throughout Africa following the Libyan interventions in Chad and elsewhere, and this only adds to the apprehension felt by many African countries concerning the policy and aims of Tripoli, and to their rejection of any intervention in the internal affairs of their country and any threat to equilibrium in Africa--which, moreover, is very precarious.

[Question] During your stay in Moscow, Mr. Minister, did you raise the question of Afghanistan with Soviet officials? If so, what impressions did you gather from those discussions?

[Answer] We particularly stated that regarding what concerns us, as members of the Islamic Conference, we associate ourselves with the resolutions and principles it has expressed on this subject. We have noted that the Afghan question constitutes a major problem for the Soviet leaders. Their position is that there must be no interference from outside in the affairs of sovereign nations, and more particularly in the affairs of Afghanistan. But I can say that the Soviet Union takes into consideration the fact that Morocco's position is first of all one of principle, and that the latter, moreover, sets a just value on the great role of the USSR as a great power and friend of the Third World, with which we maintain good relations. The Soviet Union has shown great understanding of Morocco's position, and taken into consideration these two factors, which greatly facilitated our conversations on this subject.

[Question] What impact, in your view, will the Iraqi-Iranian conflict have on the evolution of the Arab, and particularly on the Palestinian cause?

[Answer] As I was saying earlier, that conflict unfortunately is harmful to other questions confronting the Arab nation, and particularly to the Palestinian cause. That is why we have always forcefully stated that this conflict serves neither Iraq's interests nor those of Iran, and still less does it facilitate solution of the region's various problems. Thus the conflict can only have negative repercussions on the evolution of the Arab and Palestinian cause, and obstruct efforts to search for a just and equitable solution of the Middle East crisis. That is why we are making every effort for the cessation of the conflict, and so that the major problems confronting the region will be dealt with coolly, in a climate of cohesion, brotherhood and understanding by all Islamic countries, all of which need to conserve their energies so as to confront their true enemy--that is, Zionism--which still pursues with impunity its acts of destruction and occupation in the region.

[Question] At what point, Mr. Minister, are the discussions concerning the holding of the Amman Arab summit, and what do you think of the attempts by certain countries to postpone its date?

[Answer] The position of Morocco on that subject was defined at the Tunis summit of last November, when it was laid down that an Arab summit will henceforth be held yearly. Morocco then made known its agreement and support of that proposition. But at present attempts to postpone the Arab summit are emerging, and for our part we consider that in order not to further aggravate the tensions and dissensions dividing the Arab world it would be desirable to hold the summit as planned, and our position in principle on this subject had already been taken last year.

[Question] Do you not think that the countries which asked for postponement of the summit did so primarily to avoid an open condemnation of Iran, or at least having to subscribe to a resolution or motion favorable to Iraq?

[Answer] There is certainly a play of interests which emerges on the eve of any meeting of this kind. But there are also, in the case at hand, principles which must be safeguarded. That is why our position, on the Iraqi-Iranian problem as on the principle of holding inter-Arab conferences, remains unchanged, and we strongly hope that dissensions, if not eliminated entirely, will at least be reduced, in order to permit the most effective and concrete action possible to be taken at a conference of this nature and level.

6145

CSO: 4400

MOROCCO'S STRATEGY IN SAHEL ANALYZED

Casablanca LAMALIF in French Nov 80 pp 8-13

[Article by Zakya Daoud]

[Text] Will Morocco become auto-intoxicated? Could it have ascribed its own desire for peace to the Algerian leaders and credited them--wrongly--with the desire for a closer understanding, of which, it must be admitted, the Tunisian prime minister (1), Spanish journalists, and diverse personalities on all fronts, particularly from France, have claimed to see signs?

The catastrophe of El Asnam, Moroccan aid to the victims (2), the response of Mr Chadli to the message from the chief of state--is it these timid "good neighbor" exchanges which have nourished a thawing process?

Or has it rather been the statements reiterated at all levels--Algerian advocates, members of parliament, and diplomats--who in international conferences have declared to the Moroccan colleagues they deliberately searched out that there was a trend, an atmosphere, favorable to a solution to the problem of the Sahara, and who, in order not to inhibit such an (according to them) ineluctable evolution, counselled Morocco to exercise patience and discretion?

Or even an excessive awareness of changes in Algeria where recent nominations restored the primacy of the army over the party but where Algeria's internal policy has been presented as "marked by a decline in political and ideological fervor" and foreign policy as "destined to evolve in a less maximalist direction"? (3)

After the M'Hammid Attack

Have the almost continual and more or less secret contacts between the two countries--whoever may be promoting them--aroused new hopes, by setting up what more and more appears to be a trap? (4).

It would seem in spite of everything that it was the M'Hammid and Ghazlane attack of 10 October which initiated what has been called in the Moroccan press "an extended hand," a hand which of course one hurried to accept.

According to the Spanish newspapers (5), the Algerian general staff was not aware of this attack and there resulted such strained feelings between it and the POLISARIO that the ALS [National Liberation Army] was obliged to leave the region. From this

to write that "Moroccans and Algerians helped each other militarily in order to avoid a situation that could have gotten out of their control" is only a short step...If that were true, it would prove nothing but Algeria's determination to circumscribe the conflict within its present limits which perfectly fulfill the aim of weakening Morocco and preventing it--by polarizing it--from resolving its many problems, and its determination to prevent the unfolding of a generalized conflict which would in its effects be damaging to Algeria's interests. But there is no longer any need to go so far to lay bare a more simple logic: in that region, in that symbolic locality, such an attack is too large and too dangerous and, because of that fact, it does not seem to enter into Algeria's strategy. Thus, Morocco may be inclined to think as it has always wanted to think:

- 1) that POLISARIO is out from under Algeria's control;
- 2) that more and more it is taking orders from Libyan adventurism, and by virtue of this that it constitutes a threat to Algiers;
- 3) that Algeria's leaders are finally beginning to realize this;
- 4) from which arise the reassuring declarations of Algerians at all levels and the so-called Algerian pressure on POLISARIO at Freetown, where the Algerians, according to some sources, asked of Morocco a general recognition of self-determination of the Saharans as well as a certain representativity of POLISARIO. Bendjedid supposedly even told the OAU that if Morocco was willing to yield on self-determination it would be possible to reach a long-term solution.

Then the chief of state, in his speech opening parliament's new session, appeals to the Algerian leaders to draw "the necessary lesson" from the M'Hammid attack, since his conviction is that "the activity of the mercenaries is part of a vast conspiracy concocted both against Morocco and Algeria" and which aims, by attacking not just in the Sahara anymore, or even in the Tindouf triangle, but further north, to force the two countries into a deflagration which neither wants.

Morocco's Moderation at the UN

Moreover, Morocco thinks, says, and repeats (which is then taken up abroad and which serves to sustain the cycle of this auto-intoxication):

- a) That the terrain is being effectively held by the Royal Armed Forces (FAR). and increasingly so;
- b) that Freetown was not a setback in that no mention was made there of self-determination and there was no demand for the withdrawal of Moroccan troops before the referendum which was more or less called for and which Moroccan statements increasingly accept;
- c) that we must end this conflict which is excessively costly in human lives and material damage;
- d) that therefore we must negotiate and that Algeria will also end up by understanding this, especially if this understanding is encouraged by objective facts she encounters on the terrain.

The government's conciliatory attitude is also shared by the political forces. Thus the PPS (Party of Progress and Socialism), which harshly and by name criticizes the French Communist Party, believes that the referendum proposed by the OAU could take place under the aegis of the UN, and Ali Yata, secretary general of this party, makes in a report a "fervent appeal to the Algerian people for things to return to normal" and to Algeria's leaders "for negotiation and reconciliation." He declares himself prepared to meet the FLN (National Liberation Front Party). It appears clear from reading this text that the peace process has already begun.

Moreover, consciousness of this situation is growing in the western press and international fora, and it was considered a very great victory when the European parliament urged bilateral Algerian-Moroccan negotiations, and exhorted "the Algerian government not to sanction the use of its territory bordering Morocco for the launching of armed attacks against that country", and a victory that it offered to assist in mediating, and that it also condemned the intervention of third countries in the Maghreb.

The reaffirmation of the French position--neutral, but always ready to mediate if the two parties ask it--the same position that is once again being preached by Saudi Arabia and Tunisia to "help in the search for a solution and a reconciliation of views," "when conditions will be met," all this could explain Morocco's incredible moderation at the UN. Its self-confidence boosted by hearing the representatives of 10 Saharan organizations already, it is said, successfully heard in Freetown; optimism which led to presenting a text which makes no reference to either Moroccan territorial integrity, Morocco's rights, or changes in the situation, but which is along the lines of the Freetown II resolutions of which Morocco has not yet been officially informed, and on which its previous position had still been ambiguous; then the presentation of a resolution which simply alludes to the fact that the OAU is seized of the problem and that the beginnings of a solution which it calls for should be pursued and thus supported, and, after offering such a text, which puts Morocco in a position in which no country involved in such a serious, unfair, and murderous conflict has a right to put itself, the minister of foreign affairs returns to Morocco, persuaded that, as in other years, the two opposing texts--the pro-Algerian, which is clearly so, and the so-called pro-Moroccan, which is not so at all, will be voted on together and cancel each other out; the absence, finally, of a fall-back strategy should the latter not work out as planned. All this passivity and nonchalance to come to a stinging rebuff which was not understood in its true dimensions until 2 weeks later in Morocco, when the pro-Algerian text finally adopted 88-8 with 43 abstentions had to be declared "null and void."

Diplomatic Rout

For not only has Algeria trampled under foot and derided Moroccan good will, but also with clever maneuvering and a consummate mastery of UN procedure it has taken advantage of Morocco's confidence to get passed a resolution which makes reference "to the inalienable right of the people of the Western Sahara to self-determination and independence," "condemns Moroccan occupation of that territory," and "the exacerbation of the situation prevailing there," "recognizes the legitimacy of the struggle which is being waged there," and, which is even worse, "calls urgently on Morocco and on POLISARIO, the representative of the people of the Western Sahara, to begin direct negotiations."

This is a text which is extremely serious, which loops the loop of all the texts presented by Algeria at the UN in the last 5 years, and does so while the so-called pro-Moroccan text, which launched "an appeal to all states to abstain from any action which would impede this dynamics of peace and the efforts at conciliation undertaken," was rejected 40-41 with 58 abstentions.

All words are vain before such a defeat. Either Morocco has fallen in an Algerian trap set by the hand of a master, or it has taken its desires for reality!

Because there are not any negotiations between Morocco and Algeria, and the minister of foreign affairs finally had to acknowledge this, there is no question of negotiating with POLISARIO and, worse yet, on the ground the situation is being constantly aggravated. Naturally, the FAR is holding its ground, this seem undeniable, but it cannot stop all incursions if it is occupied with the installation of new security systems (entrenchments, electronic surveillance, etc.), although the aircraft should be becoming more and more operational. In reality, Morocco is in the process of establishing a security cordon around possible passes to the northeast of the Smara province.

Meanwhile, incursions and battles are becoming more frequent: Tarfaya, on 16 September, Ras el Khanfra on 3 October, M'Hamid (500 attackers) on 10 October, Ras el Khanfra on 22 October, Haouza on 26 October, Haouza on 6 November, El Kajoua on 17 November, etc. etc....It is clear, looking at the record since October, that with the exception of M'Hamid the attacks are extending down toward the south and Saquiet el Hamra.

In August there was Abateh on the 21st, the Tan Tan region on the 23rd, conflicts in the Ouarkziz region as well as Akka and Tata.

The chief of state announced in his press conference in September the cordoning of the border by the auxiliary forces and the clearing of Ouarkziz, but the attacks are extending back down to the south.

What is more, they are also taking place at sea, and it seems more and more clear that the Moroccan (at least 3). Spanish and Portuguese ships that were attacked were hit from ships which, at one point or another, dropped anchor in the Canaries. Thus, it must certainly be recognized that, far from abating, the conflict is gaining in intensity on all fronts, diplomatic as well as military (6).

Confidence and Internationalization

Inexplicably, however, Morocco appears confident. Ignorance, or awareness of tangible facts unknown to ordinary mortals? It is certain that Spain is beginning to change position before the danger threatening the Canaries. It is also certain that much is expected from the election of Mr Reagan, who is universally touted to be less evasive than Mr Carter. But how could Mr Reagan not hesitate, when Algeria puts itself into the American picture by receiving the hostages from Iran? It is also certain that the links with Moscow appear to be closer now--Moscow having affirmed, several months ago, that "the conflict can and should be resolved by peaceful means."

According to Mr Boucetta, not only is there better understanding by the Soviets of the Moroccan cause in the Sahara, but also the USSR desires no escalation [of conflict] in the region.

...It is certain also that Libyan expansionism, of which new proofs have been given in Chad and Tunisia recently, is excellent for Morocco's cause.

In fact, one cannot avoid the conclusion that the conflict in the Sahara, such as it is, is being internationalized and thus is getting worse every day, in a world torn by economic crisis and trying to re-establish its political balance. From this fact, by concentric circles, the conflict is acquiring a worldwide dimension. And, as in all conflicts of this kind, the fighting and talking continue apace, each watches the other and tests his own strength, there are temporary and permanent aspects, the immediate circumstance and the fundamental problems which one must recognize as invariant.

In order for this stalemate to become unblocked, to become unfrozen, one of the pieces of the unstable equilibrium it has reached (for the entire region is involved in this remodelling, just as is happening in Asia even if not to the same extent) must budge. The latest hypothesis--and one which is gaining more and more currency--though it is difficult here to separate the reality from the propaganda, is that the Mauritanian piece will be the first to move. Mauritania is ready to explode, its political instability testifies to it: since 1978 there have been three chiefs of state, two prime ministers, and seven cabinet shake-ups that were more or less serious. Opposition movements have appeared in France, Morocco, and Senegal, which is very concerned about what is happening with its neighbor and about which it is said that the black Mauritanian population wants to joint with it. The financial and economic predicament is intolerable. The tragic halo of Chad shines as an example of accelerated disintegration. And more, there are numerous proofs that Mauritania, under the false cover of its present neutrality is more and more engaged in the conflict on the side of Algiers and Tripoli:

--at least half the present combatants in POLISARIO are Mauritanian, 25 percent being Malians and Nigerians, and only 5 to 10 percent Saharans. According to AOSARIO [Association of Natives of Saguia El Hamra and Rio de Oro], 7,000 Mauritanian soldiers are presently in POLISARIO's ranks and some are being paid as cadres and in identical fashion. According to General Dlimi, there are Algerians, Libyans, and Chadians. Cuba, which presently has some 70,000 troops in Africa, according to President Senghor, is more and more implicated in the conflict;

--POLISARIO is believed to have known bases throughout Mauritanian territory, including Lagouira which has still not been returned to Morocco, and it could for example get the seven fishermen it kidnapped (7) all the way across 1,000 km of desert to Tindouf, while Libya has allegedly built a road infrastructure which would enable it to keep POLISARIO provisioned in arms, especially via northern Mali and Mauritania, without transiting Algerian territory. From the regime of Ould Haïdailah is more and more aligned with Algeria (which was repeated during in September visit), or perhaps there are two authorities in Nouakchott of which one is completely POLISARIO, with which certain Mauritanian leaders--and by no means the least of them--may have very close ties. Even recognition of the SDAR [Saharan Democratic Arab Republic] may have been contemplated, were Mauritanian prisoners not still detained in Algeria (8).

The Chadization of Mauritania

Convinced for some time that this was the case, Morocco's king has several times called on the Mauriticians to reintegrate their POLISARIO opponents, indeed the entire movement. Now, according to recent rumors, Algeria may be going nearly in the same direction by offering its help (Algerian cover, among other things) to Mauritania if only the latter will commit itself more to POLISARIO so the conflict can unfold more toward the south and not on the Algerian-Moroccan border where it creates a threatening situation. President Ben Jeddid is said even to have declared in his 30 October speech that the undisputed Moroccan territory would never more be attacked.

The recent nomination of a colonel as Algeria's ambassador to Nouakchott would seem to support this view.

Mauritania's disintegration or its consolidation as a POLSARIO state are part and parcel of this logic, the credibility of which only time can tell.

However, in a situation which is a clear--aggression, its goals, its methods--as it is confused (its further development), if the partners test their strength, we will have to find in matching Algerian intransigence against Moroccan flexibility that the conclusion is inescapable that concessions--even verbal ones,--incessant affirmations of good-will and dialogue--still verbal--diminish Morocco's position and are therefore unwelcome. And to the extent that there does exist in Algeria a moderate tendency which wants peace, a Moroccan attitude of this kind can only discourage rather than encourage it.

It can never be said too often that in order to obtain peace one must not be afraid of war, and that flexibility and moderation are worth nothing when one is attacked; they can only be seen as proofs of weakness. It is not just a question of enduring, but also of resisting, as has just been proven again. Naturally, of what importance are incursions when they are repulsed, and of what importance is a diplomatic defeat if one still holds the terrain; yet it could be very difficult to reverse the international consensus. But, either Morocco should oblige Algeria to make peace, to sit down at the negotiating table--and it is difficult to see how--or it must re-establish political balance and efface its defeat at the UN.

It is certainly not by sermonizing henceforth that it will attain its ends, since every day Morocco acquiesces more and more clearly in a "consultation" in the Sahara--one which would be a referendum in all but name--in application of the resolutions of the OAU committee of wise men, and today it accepts what yesterday it fiercely rejected. In reality, Mr Boucetta has just declared:

"If Africa wants to verify or authenticate (this expression of the will of the people), Morocco is open to this proposal." The minister of foreign affairs also stated his desire to have Algerian-Moroccan contacts throughout Africa.

Morocco is right not only about the past, about history--which even if true is of interest to only a few--but it is right about the future: through determined action it could save not only itself but also save the whole region from a catastrophe whose outcome is today totally unforeseeable, with all due deference to those who

reduce the problem to an ideological or geo-political confrontation between the two blocs. But is Morocco right about the present? One must, so many years after this conflict started, ask this question, because Morocco itself does not seem convinced.

FOOTNOTES

1. The Tunisian prime minister stated he had noted a rapprochement in Algerian and Moroccan views and a willingness to be reasonable as well as to search for an acceptable solution. "No war," he says. "The leaders of the two countries do not want it."
2. Morocco sent for [disaster assistance to] El Asnam the equivalent of 50 MDH [expansion unknown] represented by the sale of the sheepskins from l'Aid and Kebir, in medicine, food, and clothing items.
3. According to some sources, Algeria would like to see France play a role in the search for a solution to the Sahara. "Al Bayane" also notes the creation in the French national assembly of a study group on Saharan problems chaired by a socialist deputy.
4. According to EL PAIS, Mr Alaoui and Mr Guedira met in September in Paris with Algerian emissaries, then again in Switzerland, where a meeting under the aegis of Saudi Arabia took place in July.
5. EL PAIS, which also claims that the Algerians were irritated by the leaks coming out of their contacts with Morocco.
6. JEUNE AFRIQUE: "Morocco controls the terrain and POLISARIO the propaganda."
7. Five Portuguese and 40 Spanish fishermen, the former released, the latter held for 6 months now and for whom Spain is currently negotiating in Algiers.
8. AOSARIO denounces the abduction of Mauritanian children by the POLISARIO in the Nouadhibou region, including two children of the Ma-el-Ainin family.

9516

CSO: 4400

NEW ORDER OF DEPENDENCE DISCUSSED

Casablanca LAMALIF in French Nov 80 pp 46-48

[Article by Driss Guerraoui]

[Text] The history of international economic relations shows more and more that the inherent tendency in the world capitalist economy is the generation, on a wider base, of the dependency relationships it secretes, relationships in the absence of which the capitalist mode of production (beyond its adaptive capabilities) would be unable to survive. Only these relationships make it possible for it to see its merchandise, its capital, and its technology which in turn constitute real instruments for the generation of these same dependency relationships. The successive re-structurings which the world economy has undergone since its creation do not hide this logic inherent in the operation of the system.

The new order of dependence, christened the international division of labor, is uniquely characterized by its place in a context of generalized capitalistic crisis which cannot be explained away merely by the supposedly high cost of energy commodities. In fact, to reduce this crisis to an oil crisis is to take an ideological stance, since the increase in oil prices, which only contribute a modest share (1.2 to 2 percent, according to OECD statistics) to the total costs of all production, is itself explicable once placed in the more general context which underlies it, namely, the determination of the oil-producing countries to remedy the growing deterioration in the terms of trade with the countries which supply them with equipment goods.

This context of crisis has given momentum to a "new" strategy oriented toward a selective industrial redeployment on the international level.

Industrial Redeployment

The gamble on all-around exportation, dominant theme of this redeployment, translates in one aspect into the transfer of certain activities which have become non-competitive to the dependent capitalist countries and tends to substitute "more and more" the implantation of international capital (on the same export areas) for simple importation. Especially since the conditions for this implantation prove to be favorable: cheap and abundant labor, tax exemptions, freedom to repatriate profits, etc....All this in accordance with the wishes of the dependent capitalist states, as attests this statement by a high Moroccan official at the time of the

Franco-Moroccan meetings organized by the CNPF [National Council of French Employers] in France 20-30 January 1967 (convergence of interests dictates): "...We expect the industrial European countries and particularly the French to understand it is in their interest to come work among us and with us, to benefit from the very favorable conditions, of labor, of finance, of incentives, and in a general way of the entire economic environment that we offer them..." (1)

It is in this context that we find the diverse attempts at implantation of industrializing and/or semi-industrializing industries in certain independent capitalist countries. These attempts are also ascribed on the one hand to the redeployment of the balance of power as much at the political level as the economic within dependent capitalist countries, who more and more are demanding a change in the present order of international economic relations; and, on the other, to the new strategy of crisis-stricken international capital which sees the extension of internal markets in the dependent capitalist countries by means of the transfer of some industrializing industries as an outcome of this crisis. But an irony of fate: it is the activities which are in crisis in the "center" which are seen transferred to the "periphery" (textiles, steel-working, etc...)

But, let us not fool ourselves, "industries involving advanced technology should as a matter of high priority be developed in the industrialized countries, like France, for the Third World countries are not ready to produce it. Industrial specialization should be achieved in a selective way, and it is within industrial branches that it is appropriate to look for articles whose manufacture could be validly transferred to the Third World countries where conditions for production are particularly favorable"(2).

Yves Berthelot (3) spells out for us further the terms of this specialization: the restructuring of the world economy, he says, must take place in such a way that the competition facing the industrialized countries will be limited to certain products and will not jeopardize the existence of entire sectors...Among the sectors where exports to the industrialized countries are going to grow...some textiles and clothing, some electric (motors) and electronics (components, electronic games) assembly, leather, shoes, watch and clock making (quartz watches), precision optics, bicycles and motorcycles, jewelry and goldwork, ceramics, woodwork, and small machines.

The Importance of Agriculture

Anxious to preserve the position which falls to it in this new international division of labor, Morocco for example has already concluded several contracts with international capital, particularly with the French, for the repairing of electric goods, for production of radiators destined for special-use vehicles in Senegal, for the manufacture of office supplies and spare parts for automobiles (4).

Also, and as paradoxical as it may seem, agriculture occupies a strategic role in the totality of this process of re-structuring of the world economy in crisis. (5)

Never has capital been so interested in land, particularly in the U.S.A. (6) This strategy has caused Galbraith to say that "no one seems to have realized that the U.S.A. has become a Third World country by virtue of the structure of its

external trade. What do we export? Fewer and fewer manufactured products, except computers and airplanes, more and more wheat, soy, cotton, wood, chicken, etc..."(7) The U.S.A. is aware that "in the world of tomorrow agricultural products will be the best strategic weapon. Sooner or later nuclear weapons will be within the reach of all, which is not the case with agricultural production." (7)

Agriculture has now become a suitable sphere for the accumulation of capital. Let us recall to mind ITT's move in turkey raising and Boeing's into potato production...

"Everywhere in the Third World countries, the strategy of the multi-national companies is to absorb thousands of hectares (Brazil, Ethiopia, the Sahel, and many others) to operate there--profitably and on a large scale--industrial and commercial cultivation that is remunerative. When the company cannot acquire a vast territory, it pressures the States, through the medium of the FAO, to establish projects for which they provide the financing and in which sometimes locals also are involved, all the while knowing that sooner or later they will assume control of the companies created"(8).

In this sector, as in that of industry, redeployment is selective and is also translated into the transfer of certain agro-industrial activities to agrarian dependent capitalist countries (canning of vegetables and fruits, production of frozen foods, sub-contracting in crop disease prevention products, etc...) and into the encouragement of the introduction of new industrial and commercial crops of which the world market has need at the least cost for the reproduction of the work force at the "center" and at any time of year.

On this subject, in a letter dated 14 April 1976 addressed to the shareholders by the management of a multinational agri-business corporation, one can read: "in the countries which principally produce raw materials, our group already enjoys particularly strong positions, especially in Latin America. Since the early Sixties we have acceded to the requests of several African governments to build factories on their territory (...) finally several proposed industrial implantations in the Middle East are under study (...) This progression will lead us, when internal markets are big enough, to the introduction of new factories in close collaboration with the governmental planning organs of these various countries."

Green Revolutions

This is why in Morocco, for example, the tendency is toward development of crops which can be substituted for citrus fruits for which the European market, particularly the French, has reached a saturation point and the competition from Spain and Israel, among others, is becoming more and more lively.

Also, beyond the traditional crops destined for export (citrus fruits, tomatoes, olive oil, wine, etc...), there is concern to promote others: strawberries, asparagus, nectarines, allspice, etc... With its own special niche in the new international division of labor, Morocco is intent on keeping its position here too. Besides, Morocco's agricultural policy-makers do not hide it. In fact, "the OCE [Marketing and Export Office] and the producers have become aware of the advantages of elaborating a selective policy that would maximize the positive aspects of the international system and minimize the disadvantages, they have

developed plans for plant production: citrus plan, spring vegetables and flower plan, viticultural plan, and canned vegetable plan," tailored to the changes in the needs of the EEC. (9)

Henceforth, Moroccan agriculture must become specialized in "those enclaves where its complementarity with the Community's products is durable." (9)

The case of Morocco is not unique: Latin America, Africa, and Asia do not detract from this pattern. Everywhere the watchword is "to develop irrigation, utilization of fertilizers and pesticides, mechanization, to introduce and develop industrial and commercial crops, promote agro-industries in the framework of international specialization, in short the "green revolution" and all will be for the best in the best of possible worlds."

The immediate consequence of this mode of insertion of dependent agricultural systems into the international division of labor is the acceleration of their capitalistic development with, as a corollary, the accumulation of want on the one hand and of wealth on the other, the consequence being, already familiar in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, the aggravation of food shortage for the overwhelming majority of the populations of these regions: for the quite simple reason that in order to be responsive to the imperatives of this new international division of labor, everywhere in these parts of the world, industrial and commercial crops "take priority over food crops and take up the best land, absorb the larger part of necessary production inputs (fertilizers, pesticides, irrigation, agricultural machinery), determine the direction of research and take the biggest share of appropriations," (10) while the majority of peasants therefore find themselves thrown back on the most sterile lands, barely producing enough to keep their families alive, when they are not quite simply chased off their lands. (11)

This mode of insertion constrains the dependent capitalistic countries to develop, within the limits imposed by their position and place in the new international division of labor, and/or to import their productive power, in order to at least meet a standard equivalent to that of competing countries; for it is not enough to produce what the world market needs but one must also supply it with merchandise at the smallest cost. Now, producing neither fertilizer, nor machinery, etc...and not having a real national steelworks oriented toward the imperatives of an endogenous industrial and agricultural development, it is to international capital that these countries must address themselves in order to get everything that they need (spare parts, technical information, construction of new installations, retraining of cadres, etc...) in order to achieve productivity proportionate to the imported technology. Which therefore leads them to a durable and permanent dependence on international capital "at a time when technological domination will more and more be enough (for capital) to extract its excessive profits."

This is how the new order of dependence appears in our view.

FOOTNOTES

1. T. Bencheikh, in REVUE AFRIQUE INDUSTRIE, No. 104, December 1975, Paris.
2. P. Chauvier, in AFRIQUE INDUSTRIELLE, published by G.P. Maisonneuve and Larousse, 1979, citing Jacques Gabory, head of the industry ministry mission, p. 282.

3. Chief of the research and international issues section of the industry ministry, op. cit. p. 284.
4. CF. OECD Development Center, report of the meeting of experts on international sub-contracting and the technological absorptive capacity of developing countries, Paris 8-9 Nov. 1976.
5. At the end of 1973, Robert MacNamara said "agriculture, too long neglected, should henceforth become one of the principal objectives of the bank." Likewise in Africa, for example, the agricultural share in world bank financing presently represents half its total activities in Africa.
6. From 20 percent in 1950, cultivated land used for export grew to 30 percent in 1970. To better appreciate the strategic position of American agriculture, it is sufficient to take note of the growing share agricultural products represent in the American balance of trade.
7. Sources: LES CAHIERS FRANCAIS, April 1975.
8. Gerard Garreau, in "Agri-Business," published by Calman Levy, 1978, p. 22.
9. A. Abdallah Lahlou, in "Agricultural Development in Morocco: Colloquium on Economic Development," Vol. II, 1978, p. 2.
10. Suzanne George, in "How the Other Half of the World Is Dying," R. Lafond, p. 41.
11. 40 percent of Morocco's peasants are landless. For the other countries of the Third World, the relatively old figures at our disposal are the following: Indonesia 20 percent of the active population is landless (1971), India 29 percent (1971). In Ivory Coast, out of 275 billion CFA Fr. devoted to agriculture for the 1976-1980 period by the state alone, 67 billion go to food crops. In the Cameroons, the 1977-1981 plan favors rubber-plant, coffee, cocoa, palm oil, over wheat, rice, and corn. In Senegal, while more than one-third of grain products are imported, ground-nuts still take up 1 million hectares, or around 50 percent of the effectively cultivated surface area. Citrus fruits and olive oil represent 27 percent of the value of Tunisia's exports (JEUNE AFRIQUE, No. 957).

9516

CSO: 4400

AGRARIAN REFORM: A TOTAL FAILURE

Casablanca LAMALIF in French Nov 80 pp 30-36

[Article by Hassan Akbour]

[Text] Is it the day of judgment for what took the place of "agrarian reform" in Morocco? Already officials seem to be stirred up more than ever by the failure of the recipients of land plots to respect their obligation to produce and to discharge their debts to the state. For their part, the recipients who have survived up to now by means of more or less viable compromises are experiencing a growing malaise due to the insupportable weight of an overprotective, meddling, authoritarian, and fickle administration.

Is agrarian reform an irremediable failure?

Hassan Akbour has prepared below a survey covering the present status of this 5 percent of the agricultural land of the country that was distributed in plots to 24,000 recipients: a tiny minority barely representing 2 percent of agricultural workers. Describing the many predecessors of this experiment whose aim is to promote an agricultural middle class, agent of social and political stability, as well as agricultural production (to obtain the good grades of the IBRD), the author shows that the weight of the social and politico-administrative system results in reality in making agrarian reform a part of the "traditional" game of balance of power in the countryside. [Thus,] far from changing anything at all, it only reproduces, on its own scale and in a striking manner, the same phenomena that prevail in the overall social and political universe.

An elite, or new Khames [translation unknown], even both at the same time--the beneficiaries of agrarian reform are thus the proof, often pathetic, of the impossibility of a real re-casting of structures under present conditions.

For some time, the agrarian reform co-ops have been under critical scrutiny. In such-and-such a province, even at the governmental level, the day of judgment seems at hand. Complaints against the recipients of the agrarian reform plots are numerous and serious.

This sector, after more than 10 years of sustained effort by the state, in investment, in loans, organization, has not yielded the hopes held out for it. The stagnation, or the decline--in any case a significant fluctuation--in yields is denounced. As are the absenteeism and the illegal usage modes. Lately, the governor of the province of El Jadida deplored the negligence of certain recipients accused of having taken out a "simple insurance policy for the future" at the time of the agrarian reform without making it produce (1).

One final basic element in the case: the beneficiaries of agrarian reform are reproached for not paying back the sale price of the plots, even though they were given, through negligence or complaisance, a payment period longer than what was provided for in the law (2).

Has the day of accounting and judgment really arrived, or is this simply a speculative question: a necessary re-examination, in this period of economic crisis and budgetary deficits, provoked if not dictated by the financial entities, the IBRD in the lead? One may pause over this hypothesis, noting the insinuations--albeit timid--in matters of tax reform, the measures, quite lax or truly slothful, relative to recovery from the growers of a part of the hydraulic investments of the state (direct participation and taxation of irrigation water).

However that may be, measures are under way: centralization of information on agrarian reform cooperatives, at the provincial level, forfeitures of beneficiaries, demand for payment of arrears on rental-sales, often with notification in a manner markedly different from that prescribed by good administrative practice. A more systematic action on the part of the public authorities seems under preparation. This is what the creation of an "inter-ministerial study committee" devoted to the problems of agrarian reform cooperatives leads one to predict. (3)

Among the various agricultural sectors, why is such special attention paid to that of agrarian reform, to the point of contemplating coercive "rectification" measures? In fact, we are speaking about a sector whose importance, on the whole, is reduced: one-third (325,000 hectares) of ex-colonial farms, both official and private (4), or less than 5 percent of the agricultural area of the country, about 24,000 beneficiaries, or less than 2 percent of agricultural workers. But it is true that this sector is the object of heavy investment: infrastructure, irrigation, credit, subventions, organization, more elaborate than any except on the state farms and the big modern properties. It is true that from many points of view it represents the most advanced sector of state agricultural policy, the one which many would judge it by. Endowed with symbolic weight by its social aspect, does it not also constitute an economic and political test for the interested observers from the IBRD? Considering how much the government has lavished on it, does it not think it only fair to get something in return from what it holds out to be, whether rightly or wrongly, the finest ornament of its agricultural policy?

Beneficiaries of the Reform or State Kulaks

The agrarian reform sector, a privileged sector: this is how it is perceived by those who created it, by the cadres and the popularizers who follow it on a daily basis, by all the small peasants, including the many applicants for plots excluded from the allotments. One would be tempted to treat the recipients of the agrarian reform plots as "kulaks." But, to avoid the incorrect historical connotations, one must put their role and function in our own context.

By their promotion they are indeed privileged. They enjoy a comfortable landed position, compared to the hundred of thousands of landless and minifundiaires [translation unknown]. Facilities for paying for the plots are offered them. The mortgage on the land, in force until the debt for the price of the plot has been retired, does not hinder the possibilities of recourse to agricultural credit. They get special assistance from the state. They benefit from its agricultural equipment, from its provisioning and market mechanisms, from its subsidies.

A fair number of recipients of agrarian reform plots could be considered full-fledged members of the rural elite. The conditions of eligibility for allotment have been established with rigor and precision by the law. But the gap is so great between supply and demand that the effective modalities of choosing recipients are the critical point in the operation of agrarian reform (5). There are plenty of poor applicants, who, perhaps long after their acceptance, are astonished at having obtained the favor of the selection commissions.

But there are also those who, even though relatively well-off, have succeeded in obtaining a plot through the agency of a labyrinth of matrimonial, comcointances [translation unknown] relations.

The feeling of belonging to a rural elite, more or less diffuse, more or less real, according to the place of origin of the recipients, goes along with higher production on the economic side. Even though costs are also higher, one still finds it difficult to swallow certain expenses for well-being, even prestige: house repair, concrete construction, motorcycles, televisions, automobiles at times. As the conditions of usage have become more demanding due to the heavy investments, diverse obligations in regard to utilization, regulations, specifications--the recipients have become employers. Occasional wage-earners and diverse forms of association intermingle in new types of social relationships.

But in every case, in part because of the scarcity of the land, the work-seekers certainly have the feeling of dealing with patrons.

Conscious of their status, the most ambitious among them try to assume it in all its dimensions. From members of the elite to the status of leaders, intermediaries, or mediators, there is but a single step, which some take easily.

The leaders of the cooperatives thus acquire a "transceiver" role, on familiar terms with both the farm workers and the authorities, and capable, in certain circumstances, of playing the one against the other to their profit. They serve, however, as a general rule, as points of support for the local administration. In exchange, the latter sits on the procedure for recovering the melk [trans. unk.] land still in possession of the recipient (6). It affords several opportunities for additional income (sites, shops, taxis) and closes its eyes to the many more or less legal ways of self-enrichment.

These diverse indices testify to the privileges of the agrarian reform sector. They should not for all that hide a certain heterogeneity among or within the cooperatives, the result of the mode of selection of the recipients. Nevertheless, the role of the cooperatives in the social game seems to outweigh the differences. The recipients are, in effect, perceived by all the players, including, at least

officially, by the state, [to be] like those Russian kulaks to whom Bukharin gave the famous injunction, "Enrich yourselves!" How much is there to it? How do these kulaks perceive themselves? What is their future?

The New Khammes of the State

One could easily argue the opposite of all these theories comparing the recipients of the agrarian reform cooperatives to kulaks. Was it not a former caid [Arab chief] of the Protectorate, himself an assignee, who defined the conditions of utilization of the agrarian reform plots as a "koulfa" [trans. unk.] for the benefit of the present Makhzen [trans. unk.]? From what we know of the relations between the lords and the khammes, under the protectorate or before, that personage could well know what he was talking about.

The observation cannot sustain a precise analogy. But it remains no less true that many recipients must experience their relations with the administration in a way comparable to the way that long ago, and still today in some cases, relations obtained between the Khammes and their protector patrons.

There is, first of all, the uncertainty in the status of ownership. The plot is mortgaged over a 20-year period. The lawmakers have certainly provided for credit facilities. But it will require a whole generation, the most active part of the worker's life, to free himself from the cost of the plot and from all debts, to claim effective ownership. During all this time, he must strictly abide by the specifications and the use standards, indemnify his co-heirs perhaps (7), maintain constant productivity and feed a more and more numerous family, and concern himself with the division of labor among the children and new households within the family, in order to avoid the parcelling out of the plot. Thus, the recipient has a number of reasons for not feeling himself the proprietor of his plot. There are several reasons why the delays and prolonged mortgages should be considered a factor of uncertainty and risk.

The feeling of the precariousness of ownership is magnified in the absence of having control over the structure of production. All the conditions for usage are defined in advance by the administration. The surface of the lot, crop rotation, techniques of production, material needs, productivity, income, costs, the necessary labor units, etc...all is provided for without any consultation with the recipient.

The latter is one factor of production among others, one cog like the others in the wheels of the bureaucratic machinery.

But the abstract agro-economic plans for exploitation rarely correspond to reality.

The recipient has no room for maneuver, no power of negotiation to deal with problems. He has no right of oversight over the organization of provisioning or marketing or on the setting of prices. He has no guarantees or insurance against possible damage and the fluctuations of productivity.

The laws have provided nothing in these vital areas. But is it a mere oversight?

The major objective of agrarian reform, independently from its social aspect--which itself is debatable, moreover, because of the relatively small size of the

sector--consists in getting a return on public investment and the improvement of agricultural production. Realization of this objective is achieved, in the eyes of the state, through a forced integration of the agrarian reform cooperatives into the market economy. From the financing of allotment research, to the sale of the agro-industrial product, and the acquisition (or management) of currency. If the lawmakers put the accent on conditions of viability and stability of usage, it is in order to assure favorable conditions for this integration.

The integration of agriculture with the market implies--classic phenomenon--a draining of surplus value to the benefit of other sectors of the economy. The agrarian reform sector does not escape this. It constitutes, in large part, a sub-contracting sector for agro-industrial products: beetroot, cotton, dairy and beef pasture, as is shown by its level of participation in these branches. The increase in per-hectare productivity is encumbered by the maintenance of prices at a relatively low level. It is also counter-balanced by the increase in intermediate consumption costs. The result is a weak level of remuneration for the family's labor. However, the sector contributes to keep alive the creditors, with high interest rates, research firms, suppliers of inputs, accountants, its own managers and extension agents, the intermediaries. It also keeps agro-industry going, subsidized, moreover, by the state in certain branches (sugar factories, dairies).

Classic phenomenon, we said: the transfer of surplus value in agriculture to other branches. But it is the extent of this drainage of surplus value which counts. A question of political-economic dosification on the part of the state, to the degree that it can control all the transfer cycles. A question of daily life, with its hazards, for the recipients.

Those who hold the latter to be kulaks are basing their judgment on several external signs: motorcycles, housing and domestic goods, clothing, etc...But these new khames could retort: "What the state gives us with one hand, it takes back with the other...fivefold. We pay our expenses with money from the state, which must be paid back in a specified period with interest. We work much more than before, we hire help to finish the harvest which must be sold at a ridiculous price to the state and the factories. We make our wives and children work. We are obliged to sell our grain only to buy it back at higher prices at the most difficult times. Our children no longer drink the milk that we are compelled to sell at a price lower than the water of Sidi Harazem. And we are not free..."

The litany could go on and on. But let us rather take several eloquent examples.

The Case of Installment Payments on Plots, or State-Organized Usury

One significant instance of the apparently ambivalent position of the agrarian reform recipients--both kulaks and khames--lies in the method of selling plots established by the government.

The laws on the books provide for payment of the plots over a 20-year period, including a 2-year grace period, reduced payments in the early installments, and a . percent interest rate. The overall value of the plot is calculated in hundredweights of new wheat at the official price in the year of the transfer. But reimbursement is made [with new wheat selling at] the current annual price (official price). Knowing that this price has quadrupled since 1970, it is obvious

that the real interest rate is far higher than what is set in the law. If one takes, for example, a plot evaluated at 10,000 DH (exp. unk.) in 1970, and, by adding the 4 percent interest rate, gets a total of 14,200 DH, the reimbursement formula proves that this value is already paid-up in 10 years by the recipient, taking into account the increase in the price of new wheat.

In other words, if one assumes that the price of grain will not increase during the next 10 years, an absurd hypothesis, but the most optimistic, in our reasoning, knowing that the recipient is compelled to somehow pay for his plot over 18 years, the value paid back will then be 41,700 DH (in 1980 DH), or close to three times the real price of the plot, or an annual interest rate of more than 20 percent over 20 years (8).

In our example, the initial evaluation of the plot, including interest, was equivalent in 1970 to 420 hundredweight of new wheat. If one knows that the minister of agriculture and agrarian reform has more or less officially fixed the sale price of plots at a minimum of 700 hundredweight, one gets some idea of the scale of the usury.

This tariff, converted to an annual basis, corresponds to the production from 2 hectares of new wheat in the irrigated areas, or approximately 40 percent of the agricultural income of the plots, which average 5-acres in these areas.

Compared to the annual rate of the agricultural impost at the national level (60 million DH) the payment demanded on the 24,000 recipients in the agrarian reform sector, who only occupy, let us recall, one-third of the area of the former colonial lands, would represent all by itself almost twice this figure (9).

Another reference point: the private colonial lands recovered by the state were indemnified at relatively low prices when compared to the sale prices of the agrarian reform plots. We do not have complete statistics, but the study of several cases shows that the rates of indemnification did not exceed 5,000 DH per hectare. The sale of the colonial lands to individual Moroccans probably did not exceed these figures, despite their substantial equipment and their high productivity.

In other words, if the state recovered lands by indemnification, while permitting the landed bourgeoisie to aggrandize itself at the lowest possible cost, it reckons on recovering this handsomely on the agrarian reform sector.

A droll example of sovereignty, and an ironic conception of agrarian reform, when one is compelled to recover a national patrimony by buying it back and when one makes the beneficiaries of the allotments pay more than the indemnity.

Cooperation and Peasant Individualism

In the face of the legislative and regulatory arsenal, the usage standards, the more or less meddling surveillance of the technical services, the recipients adopt a double attitude, apparently contradictory. To certain demands of the administration with which they do not believe they should have to comply, they oppose the demand that the state assume full responsibility. A way of pushing the logic of the administration to unrealizable extremes. A way of refusal, of drawing the line that must not be crossed. This aspiration for autonomy expressed in its opposite

is concretely manifested in the resistance to incentives to cooperation. In certain domains, this is resented as veritable regimentation.

The line of demarcation between the fields of administrative intervention and the domain reserved to the recipient is observable at several levels. In the field, first of all. Various stratagems are employed to beguile the vigilance of the technician, where such exists. This can be observed with regard to methods of crop rotation, techniques of irrigation, and distribution of water.

In his utilization, the recipient adopts a unique mode of calculation, of accountability. His ideal is that all the technical and economic injunctions of the modern economy should pass by without interfering with his autonomy. To protect himself, he works along several lines at the same time, as if he were simultaneously working several fields. On the one hand, he will depend for example on the grain harvest and eventual sale of livestock to provide food for his family. On the other, various newly introduced factors should neutralize each other: the beetroot produced will partially offset the costs of cotton. The latter will pay for the selected grain seed and the purchase of a calf which, after being fattened, will serve to pay back various loans, etc...

But the shorter cycles, more demanding in terms of flexibility, labor, and technical competence, introduce new types of consumption and needs. The recipient must deal with all this, with uncertainties and anguish that are more frequent and perhaps more oppressive than those faced by his non-recipient colleague.

If the latter must deal with the same problems in the intensive cultivation zones, at least he has the freedom to resolve them in his own way. By contrast, the recipient is obliged to work with the institution to which he belongs or to resist it. He tries to participate in it as little as possible, and only makes up his mind to do so voluntarily when he is convinced it is in his interest, the two courses not being incompatible. The purchase of a tractor, for example, customarily gets the approval of the recipients, despite management problems. But the conduct of the method of production is as a general rule claimed by each individual for his field, unconditionally. In all, participation in cooperative activity remains quite weak, whatever official reports may say (10).

To believe these reports, gross production per recipient is only 6,000 DH, or, for an equipped and irrigated plot of 5 hectares, an average of 1,638 DH per hectare. Now real production should probably be more than twice this figure. Production costs for the holding rarely amount in some cases to no less than 20 percent of gross production. Now such a percentage is well above real costs, if one factors in the size of the inputs from the cooperatives.

False estimates of this kind could lead the techno-bureaucrats to dangerous conclusions about the agrarian reform sector. The figures in reality only concern activities controlled by the cooperatives, and not the total activity on the farms.

An examination of entries relative to cooperative activity proper leads to the same conclusion: the partial figure is proportionate to the participation of recipients in the cooperatives. Accordingly, by way of the benchmark that the annual agricultural income of the recipient is on the order of 10,000 DH,

participation looks like this (11):

--subscribed capital: 800 DH, of which only 2/3 is paid-in,

--legal reserves: 25 DH,

--marketing through the cooperative channel: 1,500 to 2,000 DH,

--supplies through the cooperative channel: 700 DH.

The Political Stakes

How can we explain such poor participation in the official institutions, magnified by the foot-dragging on paying for the plots, despite the letter of the law, the oversight of the technical services, and the omnipotence of the government?

Some will say that in present conditions the tapping of the surplus value is sufficient, that stronger pressure could lead to break-up of the cooperatives. Others will opt for the necessary transition in adapting to progress and technology transfer. A question of the dose of change to be administered, in sum, in expectation of great leaps forward in productivity. But the answer to this question lies perhaps primarily in the types of relations between the recipients and the local administration.

Tolerance on one side, albeit qualified and not exempt from possible reversals. Declared vassaldom on the other, but with a subtle mix of fidelity and fault-finding.

In fact, co-op members invoke the protection of the local authorities when they consider themselves too harassed by the technical services of the ministry of agriculture. The authorities fluctuate in their conduct. They are flexible and adapt to circumstances, to the importance, to the scale, of the stakes. In some cases, they deal harshly with the growers, in others, with the technicians. (12) But here there is only an apparent inconsistency. The prime objective is the safeguarding of "social peace," order, the established order, at any price. This is the guiding thread which explains all the contradictions. From which arises a multiform and continually repeated system of direct repression or temporizing, or exacerbation of conflicts in order better to reduce them, action adapted to the balance of power at the moment, to the scope of the protagonists and their audience.

As for the recipients, presently submissive, anon aloof, they are the first, whether they will or no, to pay for--if not the favor of the local government--at least its mere presence. For the intermittent manifestations of its solicitude, they contribute "mandatorily" to the diverse ceremonies where revelry is the order of the day: pavillions for the caid, displays of horsemanship, mechouis [trans. unk.] and ceremonies for sheikhs.

In these exchanges of decorous behavior, the local leaders, whether or not they are members of the cooperatives, are the pivots of the system. They constitute the critical piece in a subtle game of see-saw, between their "constituents" and the authorities. At bottom, is it not "their" order which is being defnded by the authorities? They contribute to "social peace" by moderating tensions. In case of necessity, they brandish the threat of a government ready to pounce on any

diehards. In exchange, they are allowed to enjoy some privileges, more or less juicy and profitable, signs of wealth and prestige. Called upon to lead, to contain, or to manipulate the cooperative institutions, they give it all their talent. When they are threatened in their position, the administration intervenes to keep them in their positions of command, at the cost of perverting the letter of the law. Whether these statutes are applied or not, daily practice shows that they really constitute only a varnish, an additional formalism, a screen on which are inscribed the real power relations.

It happens, however, that these modern instruments are utilized in efforts to contest the local order. The challenged leaders are then entreated to comply with the laws in force: respect for rotation of members of the administrative council, the correct establishment of utilization records and accounting ledgers, lawful votes at the general assemblies, etc... As soon as they sense the threat of an overthrow of the status quo, the authorities, if they want, and it happens that they do want, will find a way to turn the opponents into dangerous trouble-makers.

But, there are circumstances where confrontations get beyond the scope of local solutions, however subtle they may be, when the wave of discontent is too strong to be quieted and contained by the authorities. Sustained by a certain unanimity, it requires a more powerful intervention, from the central government.

The result varies widely: dialogue of the deaf, repression, temporary solutions, transitory solutions, negotiations where resort to symbols rich in history plays a not insignificant role (13). But the same objective is constantly sought: safeguard of the established order.

Agrarian Reform and Accumulation

From the analysis so far one could conclude there is an ambivalence in the agrarian reform sector. Its beneficiaries, at once kulaks and khammes, instruments for the drain-off of surplus value, to the profit of agro-industry and other sectors of the economy, should constitute this intermediate social stratum, ready for any reversal, vassals of the regime and potential rebels.

But one should above all inquire into the future of this sector from the point of view of the situation in the national economy. Now one conclusion must be clear: the agrarian reform sector is a special sector for drainage of surplus value, but not for accumulation of capital. Now of course in textbook economics the two terms should be linked, the drainage being a means of accumulation. Is this not the ultimate objective of agricultural policies: to augment agricultural production and purchasing power while releasing a surplus that can be re-invested in the most productive branches, industry in particular?

Now this is not happening in our country. This is not the place to prove it. To stick to agrarian reform, one would like to dedicate it to [producing] a veritable accumulation which, however, is not being led to any meaningful results, given the exigencies of the sector. Besides, is not the allotment itself a brake on accumulation, since a part of the surplus is necessarily recovered by the occupants of the plots?

We have already mentioned the effects of integrating the agrarian reform cooperatives to the market economy: drainage upstream by means of intermediate consumption, drainage downstream to the benefit of agro-industry. But, from the point of view of the national economy, this latter is achieved at considerable costs which burden debt service, and the balance of payments. It is, moreover, subventioned by the state. The drainage, in this instance is not a source of accumulation.

One could even observe, and this is not a paradox, a certain moderation in the draining process, at least in the most easily graspable aspects. Moderation, in terms of toleration by the public authorities of the weakness of participation in cooperative activities, laxity, despite calls [to action] here and there, (rapidly pacified, moreover,) regarding complaints about the [delays in] payment for agrarian reform loans. For a recipient to abandon his plot is an extreme rarity, contrary to what happened in other countries where the concern for accumulation seems more important, at least in principle (14). There are also a considerable number of candidates for the allotments (15).

In short, in the case of our country, if there is a drainage, there is not a drainage so big as to provoke abandonment by the beneficiaries of their plots. They are hounded a bit, but they are allowed to carry on for the moment. Is this liberality just a coincidence? The answer is to be found in the history of agrarian reform since independence.

This sector was born less out of a wish for economic development,--this is the least one can say--than from a series of circumstantial responses to internal problems, and, relatedly, to various promptings from foreign financing bodies. The agrarian reform policy is, from this fact, a policy of concession, in every sense of the word, at once a transfer, a renunciation, and a compromise. (16) A concession doubled by obstinate reluctance. Sometimes we have pleased the IBRD, with, however, more waste and less surplus value. The accordion-like evolution of the distribution of lands shows that their size has varied depending on serious events that have shaken the country. The various measures called for by the first national plans and by the political parties, massive agrarian reform, limitation on land-ownership, recovery of surplus value in nature after hydro-agricultural improvements, recasting the structures of production, etc...have remained dead letters.

Relatively sustained by public investment, loans and subsidies, the agrarian reform sector in fact receives only a small share by comparison with the well-to-do agricultural sectors, those of the state companies and the landed bourgeoisie. These sectors bring in foreign currency. In exchange, they benefit from subsidies supported in fact through a part of the external indebtedness, and in part through the indirect impost which is accelerating the impoverization of the majority of the population.

Thus, subsidies given to favored sectors, sectors which are however capable of self-financing, and even of accumulation. But government is careful not to be outstripped, even (or especially?) by these sectors. It is not rare for some factions of the landed bourgeoisie to be deprived of means of strengthening and extending themselves. It is a fact that this threatens the interests of bureaucratic fiefdoms that are well entrenched (17). It is also a fact that government pays a high price in vigilance to contain it. (18) With this kind of by-play, one is quite far from any kind of concern for accumulation and national economic development.

In such a context, the agrarian reform sector is, at most, an excrescence which government can tolerate, but being careful to contain its expansion. A relatively marginal sector, it nevertheless serves both as a tool for growth of production and as a political lever, [for] promotion of intermediate [social] strata and widening of power bases. But it is at the same time rich in potential conflict. Perhaps we are not so far from seeing proof of this. Is it then so surprising that with a more or less clever administration, one refuses it any autonomy? but takes care not to jostle it too much?

However, is it not the case that the final objective is to make of this sector a ghetto of "dismissable allottees"? One cannot help thinking this in analyzing prospects for the future. If the same economic path and policy is maintained, we will have to expect a supersaturation, without any possible outlet to the other spheres of the economy. The [already] too bountiful demography will be aggravated by the problems of co-inheritance which will not be without effect on utilization: the era of relative stability of holdings will have lasted a long time. In this little sanctuary which is still called the agrarian reform sector, one will have simply postponed by 10 or 15 years the problems experienced today by the small peasantry.

FOOTNOTES

1. AL MAGHRIB of Thursday 16 October 1980.
2. The law has provided since 1966 for rental sale of domainal plots stretched out over 20 years, with 1 years of deferred payment. See below for more details.
3. According to AL MAGHRIB 16 October 1980.
4. Also the collective land allotted in the prescribed irrigation perimeters, which are not at issue here, integrated quite wrongfully into the agrarian reform sector.
5. The number of candidates actually registered represents in some cases 6 times the number of plots offered. It is more difficult to have an idea of the number of potential applicants. One must take into account those who have taken the first steps and fallen by the wayside, those who from the start have no hope of success and refrain from filing their applications, etc...
6. The laws provide for the recipients of domainal plots to turn back to the state their melk [trans. unk.] lands and undivided shares of collective plots that are to be incorporated in agrarian reform.
7. In order to avoid co-ownership and parcelling of the plot, the legislation provides that in event of death of the recipient a sole heir is to be designated the recipient and to be responsible for indemnifying the other co-heirs.
8. These figures are sufficiently eloquent to refrain from extrapolating them to the present, which would make the figures even higher.

9. Grosso modo [trans. unk.], 106,650,000 DH on the basis of 37 hundredweight of new wheat per recipient (120 DH per hundredweight, in 1980).
10. Voluminous reports, thousands of pieces of paper and charts, considerable work, but in truth useless: it is simply a question of the accounting practices of the cooperatives, set up in a hundred different ways, and which can give no reliable index of holdings within the cooperatives.
11. We are not speaking of a national average, but of frequencies, if we are to judge by the files consulted on several of the regions.
12. A number of technicians, in such-and-such a province, have been locked up for several days on the premises of the administrative authorities. Released most of the time without charges, one can thereby conclude that it is often a question of settling scores through abuse of authority.
13. For some time, farmers, including the recipients of agrarian reform plots in the Marrakech region, exasperated by the demands of the administration, or by the force of inertia which determines its response to their problems, have been fleeing--men, women, and children--to the sanctuary of Moulay Ali Cherif (Marrakech), the ancestor of the Alaouite dynasty. This is what happened at mid-year, by way of protest against the requirement for immediate pay-off of arrears on the purchase of agrarian reform lots.
14. B. Etienne and A. Zghal seem to generalize incorrectly from the abandonments in three Maghreb countries, with their theoretical remarks about agrarian reform. It is true that they are in fact only studying the Algerian and Tunisian experience. (Cf. "Agrarian Problems in the Maghreb," CRESM CNRS 1977).
15. See Note 5.
16. "Little Robert."
17. As an example, the OCE recently opposed the demand, formulated by ASPAM [Association of Citrus Growers of Morocco] for majority shareholding in the capital of the citrus-processing factories, and for a share in the stock of the cold storage facilities. See AL FALLAH of September 1980.
18. To go back to the citrus sector, the government decided to offer assistance, with a view to a partial rehabilitation of the citrus orchards, of 3,500 DH per hectare, joined to a long-term loan (10 years) of 15,000 DH per newly-planted hectare, at only 6 percent interest, and a 5-year deferral of payment!

9516
CSO: 4400

TUNISIA

FOREIGN MINISTER, GDR COUNTERPART SPEAK AT DINNER

Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in French 6 Dec 80 p 6

[Report on speeches given by Tunisian Minister of Foreign Affairs Hassan Belkhoja and GDR Foreign Affairs Minister Oskar Fischer at dinner at Africa Hotel in Tunis on 4 December]

[Text] Mr Hassan Belkhoja, minister of foreign affairs, gave a dinner in honor of Mr Oskar Fischer, minister of foreign affairs of the German Democratic Republic, at the Africa Hotel Thursday evening.

On this occasion, the two ministers exchanged toasts. In his speech Mr Hassan Belkhoja said:

"Like the atmosphere that prevailed during our talks, our relations have always been friendly, frank, and reasonable. A climate of understanding and cooperation on a basis of mutual respect and noninterference has come into being. For, in spite of their specific characteristics and differences, our countries see eye-to-eye on the objectives to be achieved: economic, social, and cultural development for the benefit of that value which is in our eyes supreme—man."

Mr Hassan Belkhoja emphasized on this subject the principles on which the work of economic and social development in Tunisia is based: planning, permanent dialog with the people, preservation of national unity, and equitable distribution of the fruits of growth.

"This rational policy, which we call Destourian socialism," the minister said, is essentially pragmatic. It is a permanent search. It gives great importance to each one's sensibilities. It does not exclude the possibility of errors, and willingly brings to bear—when needed—the necessary correctives. This is not an imported method, for it assumes that socialism takes specific forms. Above all, our socialism is an ethic, a spirit.

"In our battle for the promotion of man, the government has determined upon a strategy of development which relies first of all on the national effort, without excluding, however, loyal cooperation founded on equality between partners and respect for mutual interests. The GDR is prominent among those countries with which we wish to maintain and further develop this form of relationship. On this subject it is interesting to note that the second session of the Tunisian-East

German joint commission, which was just held in East Berlin, has decided to develop and to balance our economic exchanges. Our economic cooperation, which is expected to materialize in important industrial projects, should indeed proceed, develop and spread to other domains, especially technical and technological fields, thanks to which your country is the eighth industrial power in the world.

Speaking subsequently of Tunisia's foreign policy, Mr Hassan Belkhoja made clear that Arab, African Tunisia, a nonaligned Mediterranean country, does not cease to work for a peaceful solution to the problems which interfere with the progress of humanity toward peace, progress, well-being, and a relaxation of political, economic and social tensions.

After recalling Tunisia's permanent efforts to promote detente and the establishment of an international economic new order, Mr Belkhoja restated the position of Tunisia and its president on these points, saying:

"Arab Tunisia has on repeated occasions called for a just and equitable solution to this great injustice of our century, through the wise voice of its president.

"In martyred Palestine, more than 15 years ago President Bourguiba advocated an arrangement founded on international legality, the basis of Israel's own statehood, which would be null and void without it.

"Today Tunisia continues to strive for the application of a solution which would restore to the Palestinian people their national inalienable rights, which includes self-determination and the creation of a sovereign state under the aegis of the PLO. We also remain convinced that any peace process in this region is inevitably doomed to failure as long as Israel perseveres in its aggressive policy and its repeated challenges to UN resolutions and to the will of the international community. Its recent legislation on the holy city of El Qods, its settlements in the Golan, and its forays into southern Lebanon provide supplementary evidence and irrefutable proof of its expansionist and imperialist policy."

In his reply, Mr Oskar Fischer underlined the friendly nature of the bilateral relations, recalling that the first commercial accord between Tunisia and the GDR dates from 20 years ago, and that these contractual ties have been reinforced since then by a whole series of conventions and accords, as well as by the bolstering of economic cooperation.

Mr Fischer indicated that the GDR is inclined to pursue the development of bilateral relations on the basis of mutual interests.

Turning to the subject of the preservation of world peace, the GDR minister of foreign affairs declared that during the Eighties it would be necessary to put an end to the arms race in order to reinforce political detente and disarmament.

Regarding the Middle East conflict and the Palestine cause, Mr Oskar Fischer said:

"The GDR holds that the way to a lasting peace in the Near East can be found only through a global political solution of the problem with the direct participation of all interested parties, including the Arab people of Palestine, through their legitimate representative, the PLO. This would require the withdrawal of Israeli

troops from all the Arab regions occupied in 1967 and the achievement of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, including their right to their own independent state. To these ends it is necessary to guarantee the sovereignty and security of all the states in that region. We condemn both Israel's annexation of the eastern part of Jerusalem--which is contrary to international law--and the decision proclaiming Jerusalem the 'eternal and indivisible capital' of Israel."

Mr Fischer further reaffirmed emphatically the spirit of "solidarity with which the GDR supports the peoples who are fighting for their freedom in southern Africa."

He also stressed that all the conflicts that still exist in the world must be resolved in a peaceful manner, without external intervention, and with the strictest respect for territorial sovereignty and integrity.

The GDR minister of foreign affairs further reaffirmed his country's support for the "legitimate demands for reorganization of international economic relations on an equitable and democratic basis."

He declared that his country gives aid in various forms to developing countries on the basis of equality and mutual interest.

The outlook for relations between the GDR and Tunisia is favorable and full of promise, he said, adding that pursuit of the development of bilateral relations is in accordance with the interests of both peoples and serves peace.

9347

CSO: 4400

ECONOMY MINISTER HOLDS MEETINGS IN GDR

Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in French 28 Nov 80 p 4

[Report on meeting of Tunisian-GDR joint commission in East Berlin]

[Text] Mr Abdelaziz Lasram, the minister of national economy, who is currently in East Berlin for the meeting of the second session of the Tunisia-GDR joint commission, had a series of talks Wednesday with several high-level East German officials and ministers, in particular Mr Hampel, minister for heavy machinery; Mr Steger, minister for electrical engineering and electronics; and Mr Bayle, a member of the Council of Ministers. Moreover, the minister of national economy had a meeting with Mr Willy Stoph, chairman of the Council of Ministers. During these talks, which were attended by Mr Ammar Souidi, Tunisia's ambassador in East Berlin, Mr Abdelaziz Lasram and the East German officials expressed pleasure at the positive development of bilateral relations and cooperation between Tunisia and the GDR during the last few years, agreeing to insure that this fruitful cooperation will be strengthened and expanded in all fields which offer especially favorable development prospects for both countries, in particular technology, industry and agriculture.

The minister of national economy along with his East German counterpart, Mr Horst Soehle, then presided over the plenary meeting of the second session of the Tunisia-GDR joint commission.

During this working meeting the two parties studied in detail and in depth the possibilities for and ways of strengthening economic and industrial cooperation between Tunisia and the GDR, particularly in the energy sector, where Tunisia could benefit from the very advanced East German technology to develop substitute forms of energy and especially to make use of its lignite.

Significant plans for cooperation in this area were decided on.

It should also be noted that at noon on Wednesday the East German minister for foreign trade held a luncheon at his department in honor of his Tunisian guest and members of the accompanying delegation.

During the luncheon, in which several ministers, deputy ministers and high-level officials from various East German ministerial departments took part, Messrs Lasram and Soehle expressed the hope that the positive results of this second session of the joint commission will help give new impetus and dynamism to the development of bilateral relations and cooperation between the two countries.

It should be noted that Mr Abdelaziz Lasram's visit to East Berlin and the meeting of the second session of the Tunisian-East German joint commission were widely reported in the GDR's mass media.

TUNISIA

DEFENSE MINISTER VISITS SAHARAN OUTPOSTS

Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in French 10 Dec 80 p 4

[Text] Slaheddine Baly, minister of defense, devoted all day Monday and yesterday morning to an inspection visit to the Saharan Brigades of the National Army, deployed on the front line in the extreme south of the country. The minister, who was accompanied by regional staff of the Medenine governorate and high-ranking officers of the National Army, made contact with officer, noncommissioned officers, and soldiers in the ranks of the Saharan Brigades and inquired about their living conditions.

He also visited the village of Borj Al Khadra situated on the Tunisian-Algerian-Libyan frontier and familiarized himself with economic and social projects undertaken by the National Army. These consist mainly of housing construction projects and putting agricultural land to work (planting of palms and other fruit trees and irrigated perimeters).

After having visited the mausoleum of the martyrs and recited the Fatiha for the peace of their souls, the minister made contact with the inhabitants of this village, telling them that the Supreme Champion devotes great attention to the remote regions and exhorting them to attend to the land and work to make it productive, in collaboration with the army and the regional and local authorities.

At Remada, the minister of national defense first betook himself to the memorial for the martyrs before inspecting the construction site of the city airport. Built by the national service with investment on the order of 1.2 million dinars, this airport will contribute to vitalize economic life and Saharan tourism in the region.

In all the centers he visited, Slaheddine Baly spoke to the soldiers and gave them injunctions.

At Temada barracks, he gave an account of the activities of the Saharan Brigades. In a speech to the officers, NCO's and common soldiers present, the minister stressed that the chief of state, the supreme commander of the armed forces, is constantly concerned about the national army and in particular the Saharan Brigades. He affirmed the concern of the president of the republic to provide the army with the equipment necessary for it to be able to defend the country as well as possible.

After having paid homage to the soldiers of the Saharan brigades, Mr Baly underlined that the individual soldier, whatever his rank, is first of all a militant dedicated to authentic Destourian values and principles, committed to defend the integrity of Tunisia, the institutions of the state, and the gains of the people, and resolved to contribute to the work of nation-building.

The minister exhorted all the soldiers to remain vigilant at all times, and to be on the watch to foil any efforts against the Bourguibist regime and to impugn the sovereignty of the country. He urged them to cooperate closely with citizens and the authorities of the police and the national guard to order to fulfill the sacred duty of defense of the country in the best possible way.

He stressed, in this regard, that the Tunisian people, united under their leader, his government, and his party, are proud of their identity and their achievements. Naturally, our people are a peaceful people, but they are determined to defend their integrity, their institutions, and their achievements by all means and all the strength they have.

We note that Slaheddine Baly's injunctions were most favorably received by the populace in the regions visited who reaffirmed on this occasion their indefectible attachment to the Supreme Champion and their determination to be "soldiers on the border" completely committed to defending the Fatherland and the republican regime, to preserving national unity, and to contributing to the realization of our national objectives of development in harmony and solidarity.

9516
CSO: 4400

TUNISIA

NAVAL BASE AT KELIBIA TO RECEIVE REINFORCEMENTS

Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in French 26 Nov 80 p 4

[Unsigned article: "Mr Baly Inspects Kelibia Naval Base"]

[TEXT] Mr Slaheddine Baly, the minister of national defense, inspected the Kelibia naval base yesterday morning, accompanied by Capt Habib Fdhila, Navy chief of staff.

The minister, who was also accompanied by the first delegate of the Nabeul Governorate and the secretary-general of the Coordination Committee, was briefed on the activities of naval forces in this zone and visited the naval base's various facilities before arriving at the port of Kelibia, where he visited the patrol boat "Menzel Bourguiba."

In a speech to the officers in charge of the base, Mr Slaheddine Baly referred to the strategic situation of Kelibia region in the area of national defense, which, he said, necessitated the establishment of a naval base which would make an important contribution to the activities of the national armed forces.

The minister pointed out on this occasion that his department has decided to provide reinforcements for the navy in this strategic region, particularly in manpower and necessary equipment, and he emphasized in this context that Tunisian military men, whatever their rank, are still active citizens, aware of their responsibility to the nation and faithful to the principles of Bourguibism.

The minister went on to say that the Supreme Warrior [President Bourguiba] takes a special interest in the armed forces and constantly advises those in charge to insure continuous training within the armed forces so that they can master modern weapons and new military techniques.

The minister also said that the navy fulfills an important role particularly in the defense and control of territorial waters, and he exhorted the armed forces and the entire Tunisian population to be vigilant and to uphold Tunisia's policy in defense matters which is a policy of militia-type defense and which involves joint responsibility and collective effort in the framework of national unity.

The minister paid tribute to those in charge of the naval base for their constant meritorious efforts.

BILLS PASSED ON ADMINISTRATIVE REORGANIZATION, IMF QUOTA

Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in French 29 Nov 80 p 4

[Report on National Assembly passage of two bills--"Administrative Reorganization of the Republic's Territory" and "Increase in Tunisia's IMF Quota"--on 28 November]

[Text] The National Assembly passed two bills when it met yesterday morning in plenary session, presided over by Mr Ferjani Bel Haj Ammar, vice president of the assembly, and in the presence of Messrs Mansour Moalla, minister of finance and plan, and Moncef Bel Hadj Amor, minister attached to the prime minister for civil service and administrative reform. The first bill amends the decree of 21 June 1956 relating to the administrative organization of the territory of the republic, and the second authorizes the Tunisian Government to increase its International Monetary Fund quota.

The report drawn up by the Foreign Affairs Committee on the subject of the first bill pays special attention to vacant posts to be seen in various governorates after many facilities were set up in 1977 under the authority of either the first delegate or the governorate's secretary-general.

These vacancies are due either to certain cadres refusing to occupy the posts to be filled in certain regions or to the difficulty in finding cadres who combine the required administrative competence with political and social training.

Two Delegates in Each Governorate's Chief Town, Four Additional Posts for Tunis Governorate

According to the report, it has also become necessary to overhaul the current organization in order to provide flexibility so the government can fill the vacant jobs more easily.

Hence the amendment which proposes establishing two delegate posts in each governorate's chief town and four additional posts (two first delegates and two delegates) in Tunis Governorate because of its importance and of how much it is entitled to.

During the debates, nine deputies spoke. They suggested standardizing the texts concerned with reforming similar organizations, and they asked for explanations relating to administrative reform, administrative organization within the governorates, and the scope of the proposed amendment on decentralization.

The debate also provided an occasion for the deputies to ask the government to define the outline law for governorates designed to satisfy their needs, which must be given full attention, in the way of senior management and resources. There is also good reason to examine more closely all the reasons for the refusal of certain cadres to work in the provinces.

In his response, Mr Moncef Bel Haj Amor first of all recalled that the cadre organization is broken down as follows:

--171 delegates

--21 first delegates

--133 section chiefs, of which only 40 are on the job

--19 secretaries-general, 1 secretary-general per governorate

Then the minister talked about the policy the government is proposing to carry out to achieve decentralization according to which the governor is to play a coordinating and organizing role in the governorate.

He added that this is why we envisage the gradual elimination of the position of section chief within the governorates, as that function will be assumed directly by the regional leaderships which have been or will be established to represent the different ministries.

The governor will therefore have to rely on these regional leaderships for administrative and technical support. The appointment of two delegates, and the naming of a first delegate, will enable the governor's coordinating and organizing role to be strengthened by cadres who combine administrative competence with political training and social influence.

After recalling that the administrative reform is meant to provide, among other things, for improvement in the material conditions of civil servants and particularly of those working in the interior, the minister mentioned the existing outline law pertaining to governorates. Its implementation, partial up to now, will of course be improved thanks to the administrative reform which will be brought in at the regional level.

On the subject of Tunis Governorate, whose importance he highlighted because of its geographical size and the diversity and complexity of the tasks it is involved in, the minister observed that adding strength to its cadre organization is necessary because of the volume of tasks which have been or are to be undertaken to insure the success of plans already underway.

As for the territorial division of the country, the minister stressed the flexibility of a government which responds to the necessity to alter this division whenever the need arises.

However, at the same time this division must take into account administrative needs and economic conditions.

He said that, apart from the administrative division of territory, there is also the intention to create economic regions which group together governorates or parts of governorates which have similar economic conditions.

In this context the minister referred to the example of the central Tunisia plan, the northwest plan, or those of the south, which are economic regional types.

Increase in IMF Quota

Then the National Assembly examined the bill authorizing the government to increase the Tunisian Republic's contribution to the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

In the report drawn up jointly by the Political Affairs Committee and the Committee on Finance and Plan, it is noted that the Tunisian Government joined the IMF in 1958 with a contributory quota of 12 million dollars and that since that time the Tunisian Government has increased its quota five times so that by 1971 it had reached 63 million Special Drawing Rights (SDR), the unit which since 1970 has replaced the dollar in IMF accounts.

It should be noted that the amount of an IMF member country's quota determines the size of the benefits that country can take advantage of in the IMF context.

In accordance with the decision of the IMF governors dated 11 December 1978, Tunisia is authorized by the IMF to increase its quota up to an additional 31.5 million SDR, which will bring its total quota to 94.5 million SDR. This increase will allow Tunisia to take advantage in that same proportion of the benefits offered by the IMF, particularly the automatic drawing rights and the facilities directed at helping member countries who need to make up balance of payments deficits.

During discussion of the bill, two deputies spoke asking for explanations of how the IMF's machinery works and asking about the advantages Tunisia can gain from its membership in this body.

In his response, Minister of Finance and Plan Mansour Moalla reviewed the history of the IMF and the circumstances prevailing when it was set up, noting that the IMF, established just after World War Two to assist in the reconstruction of the European countries, then broadened its field of activity to Third World countries with the goal of helping these countries bring their payments balances back into equilibrium.

After observing that Tunisia's balance of payments deficit during the second decade of development has annually been on the order of 250 million dinars, Mr Mansour Moalla noted that this deficit has been made up by the inflow of foreign capital and by medium and long term credit such that Tunisia has not needed to have recourse to the IMF, which, he explained, generally sets draconian conditions for countries who request its assistance, by imposing corrective and adjustment measures in all areas of economic policy on those countries. Many countries have complained about these conditions and the IMF has had to make its policy more flexible so that the conditions it imposes do not give rise to serious upheavals in the economies of countries requesting assistance. In this way the IMF's policy has been orienting itself more toward preventive action by giving advice ahead of time on development plans of member countries. In this manner the IMF fulfills an advisory function by giving member countries the benefit of its experience and expertise in international economic affairs.

Speaking about why it is in Tunisia's interest to be a member of the IMF, Mr Mansour Moalla explained that Tunisia as a matter of principle should be present in all international bodies so as to be better informed about the world situation in all areas. Furthermore, Tunisia's membership in the IMF and the privileges it enjoys within that body are one more guarantee of our country's being able to ask for IMF assistance as a last resort.

Turning to the Arab Monetary Fund, the minister explained that this organization is still in its early stages and that it is designed to play the same role as the IMF but for the specific benefit of Arab countries. This fund, he added, is meant to change and increase its function with a view to becoming a sort of central bank of Arab countries and its role would be to finance and encourage trade among Arab countries. The Arab Monetary Fund, Mr Moalla added, could also help in financing stockpiling of certain Arab agricultural products so as to protect them against the fluctuation of world prices.

Regarding the lifting of foreign exchange controls, the minister stressed that this operation must be carried out gradually in accordance with the country's economic growth, and he recalled in this regard the acts undertaken as first steps toward lifting controls, such as the annual import authorizations for industry or the Tunisian-Kuwaiti Bank, which will move toward convertibility of the national currency.

9631

CSO: 4400

PRIME MINISTER ANNOUNCES NO PRICE HIKES

Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in French 14 Dec 80 pp 1, 5

[Text] Mr Mohamed Mzali, the prime minister, presided yesterday morning at the Palace of Congress over the meeting of the sectoral commissions sprung from the Supreme National Planning Commission.

In a speech he gave on this occasion, the prime minister analyzed aspects of social and economic development policy and the objectives of the Sixth Five-Year Plan.

Mr Mzali announced that the price of basic commodities such as sugar, bread, dough, and food oil will not be increased. The government, according to Mr Mzali, sprung from the people and devoted to the service of the people, is convinced of the necessity of protecting the purchasing power of the citizens and in particular of those in the low-income brackets, as it is convinced of the necessity of assuring, by all means necessary and especially by the increase of production, the improvement of productivity, and the struggle against speculation, a balance between wages and prices.

The prime minister indicated that the government has made the decision not to increase the price of basic necessities even though the cost of some of them is determined abroad. In this connection, Mr Mzali gave as an example the cost of sugar, which annually costs the subsidization fund 30 million dinars.

Sixth Plan: The Plan of Challenges

Analyzing the broad lines of the next plan, the prime minister indicated that it aims at stemming the gaps between individuals, regions, and social categories, through a long-term work aimed at reinforcing rural and regional development, at revising the tax structure, and at reforming the structure of wages and prices. After having recalled the stages through which the country has been in the last two decades, in the fields of universalizing education, job creation, building infrastructure, agricultural modernization, and intensification of industrialization, the prime minister underlined that these achievements have engendered new aspirations among the citizens and particularly among the youth, which requires preserving these gains and proceeding to the corrective measures necessary to fill in the gaps and attenuate the imbalances.

He also asserted that the Sixth Plan will be the plan of challenges in a number of fields, particularly employment, social justice, the renewal of agriculture, and overall reform, guaranteeing that the government will persevere in the permanent and responsible political dialogue it has begun to put into practice in accordance with the recommendations of the Supreme Champion.

The prime minister emphasized that jobs will be of primordial importance in the next plan, taking into account the fact that it is impossible to conceive a stable and solid model of society if a part of the population is deprived of a source of income.

Absolute Priority for Agriculture

He stated in this regard that the government plans on putting this question at the top of the list of its concerns, especially since the number of first-time job-seekers is continually growing.

"To meet the challenge of employment, we must create 65,000 jobs per year throughout the next plan, which requires the intensification of our investment capability and the revision of priorities that were hitherto established in our development activity."

After having recalled the hemorrhage of hard currency caused by the importation of basic food products, the prime minister reaffirmed that agriculture will be the absolute priority in the next plan, "for this is a sector which is found either upstream or downstream from several other branches of the economy. It is able to firmly establish the rural population on the land, to encourage urban flight from the rural zones, or to curtail the rural exodus, with the social and moral problems which arise from this." [sic]

Reduce Our External Financial Dependence

The prime minister added: "The promotion of agriculture, in particular the work of the development in general, is not only conditioned by investment; it is also and especially closely tied to the evolution of attitudes. The activity that we undertake to this end of re-establishing the value of agriculture necessarily requires a psychological and cultural revolution able to eliminate archaic habits and modes of thought that have accumulated and become fixed over the years."

He also stated that development activity must be an instrument for achievement of social justice, by working toward the attenuation of gaps between social categories. From this standpoint, he underlined the necessity of maintaining the green belt around the capital and the large cities through specific action to be inscribed in the program of rural development.

Mohamed Mzali then noted, with considerable bitterness, that the investigation of consumption made in 1975 showed that 20 percent of the population enjoy only 5 percent of the national product, while the wealthiest 20 percent enjoy 50 percent of the GNP. This imbalance between individuals is also found with respect to the regions, since the gap is equally large between the coastal regions and the interior.

He also emphasized that the Sixth Plan will concern itself with the achievement of balancing external accounts and doing so by reducing our external financial

dependence by means of mobilizing our own means, the encouragement of savings, the promotion of exportation of goods and services.

Our Socialism is a Socialism of Development and Production

Mohamed Mzali mentioned, among the essential reforms that must be boldly undertaken, reform of the Administration in order that it should "become an effective instrument for the execution of the policy of the state and serve the citizens," the reform of education and training programs with the aim of "assuring a better balance between the imperatives of social democracy and the constraints of economic profitability and achieving an osmosis between the school and the socioeconomic environment," the reform of public enterprises with the aim of making them factors for economic and social development, and reform of the structure of Social Welfare and Public Health.

The prime minister next defined some concepts which are basic to Tunisian policy. Speaking of Destourian socialism, he emphasized that its principles are clear, so clear that they have made it possible for us to surmount crises and transcend them. Our socialism such as the Supreme Champion reaffirmed it at the Tenth Congress of the Party is socialism with a human face.

It is also a democratic socialism, for it brings together all the agent of production and tends toward social justice. It is above all a socialism of development and production since we refuse to camouflage our failures with slogans which reality has deprived of any credibility.

Involve the Workers in the Management of Enterprises

Our socialism, the prime minister continued, also seeks to establish balance and complementarity between the three sectors (public, cooperative, and private), rather than to see one in a dominant position over the others.

The prime minister then defined the respective functions of the three sectors.

--The public sector: it must intervene in the strategic domains, its role being to plan, to inspire, and to organize.

--The private sector: this sector will continue to be the object of all necessary attention in order for it to fulfill its social and economic functions which are respectively to involve the workers in the management of enterprises and to go beyond the very limited commercial vision by searching for modern methods of management and investment and by working for the conquest of new markets.

--The cooperative sector: this sector through voluntary membership, which must be its basis, is a means for the mobilization of efforts and for channeling them. This is why we are proposing to take a set of measures and to do so by creation of a people's national bank which will have to participate in the development of cooperative activities in the rural zones, such as artisanal activities.

The Cooperative Sector Should Again Assume its Rightful Place

Mohamed Mzali called for serious reflection on the three sectors in an unprejudiced fashion in order to put the cooperative sector back in its rightful place and

permit it to fulfill its social and economic functions in complete harmony with the two other sectors.

The prime minister underlined, also, that the development activity that will get underway cannot succeed unless we establish a serene political climate likely to assure the participation of all active forces in the management of affairs of the citizens and in the design of the nation's future.

"To meet this challenge of dialogue and democracy may not seem at all easy. But we are prepared--and the Tunisian people have on more than one occasion proven it--to meet the challenge and to engage the country in a democratic process which brings together the strength of labor and youth and the other classes of the people in the framework of an active and harmonious solidarity."

At the end of his speech, the prime minister spoke of Tunisia's relations with friendly and fraternal countries. These relations are at present satisfactory. With Morocco and Algeria we have been able, through our contacts, to establish relations based on mutual confidence. With the fraternal Arab countries we have worked to bring a new dimension to our cooperation which can concretely manifest our solidarity and our common destiny.

With the other friendly countries, we maintain good relations while still acting to adapt them to our wish for cooperation and to the necessity of establishing a new international economic order.

Mansour Moalla, the minister of planning and finance, next took the floor to explain the various stages of elaboration of the Sixth Plan and its principal orientations, particularly as they concern job and investment creation. The idea, in effect, is to create approximately 65,000 jobs per year and to make investments on the order of 7 billion dinars while still being careful to maintain a certain balance between the imperatives of development and the effectiveness of the investments authorized.

The minister also underlined the necessity of reinforcing the capability of the country to research and identify projects, in this connection urging the banks and financial and economic institutions as well as the regional services to create research bureaus that can contribute to the identification of projects.

9516
CSO: 4400

COOPERATION WITH MALTA REPORTED

Prime Minister Invites Mintoff

Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in French 10 Dec 80 pp 1, 5

[Text] At the invitation of Mohamed Mzali, prime minister, Dom Mintoff, the Maltese prime minister, will make an official visit to Tunisia starting today.

In the course of his visit which will go on to 12 December, the Maltese prime minister will reside at the Essaada Palace on the Marsa. Dom Mintoff, who will arrive this afternoon, will have talks with Mohamed Mzali who in the evening will host an official dinner in his honor at the Essaada Palace.

On Thursday 11 December he will be received in audience by President Bourguiba and will visit tourist facilities in Nabeul. In the evening, Hassan Belkhoja, minister of foreign affairs, will host a dinner in his honor.

Mr Mintoff will leave Tunis Friday morning.

In light of the positive progress made by Tunisian-Maltese relations in recent years, this visit will probably give new impetus to an economic cooperation which the two sides today seem determined to raise to the level of the historical relations which always existed between the two countries.

In fact, the distant past of the two peoples is rich in parallels, and intensive cultural exchanges between the two communities have even encouraged the emergence in this country of a Maltese national language that is about 70 percent of Arabic origin.

However, recent history has not favored close enough relations or the exploitation of particularities that united the Tunisian and Maltese peoples.

It was necessary for the two countries to completely recapture their sovereignty and discover their Mediterranean vocation in order to proceed to a fresh start in their relations. The latter, however, do not yet correspond to the aspirations of the two people toward better understanding and closer cooperation.

Of course, for several years, there have been steps taken toward the establishment of fruitful cooperation. But it remains no less true that the results seen up to now are inadequate, especially if one considers the frankly promising possibilities open to the two countries.

The most important of these steps concerns the creation in August 1978 of the joint commission. This institution which held its first meeting in November of the same year has come to identify the sectors which could benefit from more effective bilateral cooperation.

It is important to emphasize that the Tunisian decision to name a resident ambassador to Vallette expresses the determination of the Tunisian Government to raise relations with this neighbor country back up to the level of the historical relations between the two peoples.

As for the sectors already identified by the joint commission, these include trade, fishing, communications, and tourism, which offer great possibilities for development, both quantitative and qualitative, of cooperation between the two countries.

Regarding commercial relations, it is fitting to mention that Malta, which imports almost all of its food product needs, could do a profitable business on the Tunisian market. Besides, all the geographic, economic, and cultural factors favor these exchanges.

For its part, Tunisia could utilize the Maltese port infrastructure and especially the shipyards, which are among the best equipped in the Mediterranean.

In the field of fishing, big possibilities are open to the two countries with regard to the exploitation of the wealth hidden in this part of the Mediterranean, and also with regard to the identification of resources on which cooperation could be solidly based by providing the best prospects for development.

As for the sectors of communications and tourism, both Tunisians and Maltese have many times shown the desire to draw the benefits open to them with greater cooperation in these two domains. The establishment of air links between Vallette, Tunis, and Stax, intensification of the air and sea traffic between the two countries, the development of reciprocal visits, especially after the elimination of visas--all these are factors which augur for a promising future.

In connection with cooperation in the tourism field, it is appropriate to stress that Tunisia and Malta, instead of presenting themselves as rivals offering the same products and same services, could design tours that would profit both countries by bringing in the tourist dollar.

All these are possibilities which here and now could be exploited to the advantage of the two sides and at the same time light the way toward more fruitful cooperation.

It is in this context that the Maltese prime minister's visit takes place. The object above all will be to give concrete expression to the determination of the

Tunisian and Maltese governments to promote cooperation which both sides want to be exemplary, that is, to respond to the aspirations of the two peoples.

Mintoff's Departure Statement

Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in French 13 Dec 80 p 1

[Text] Dom Mintoff, the Maltese prime minister, left Tunis yesterday at 1330, following an official visit which lasted 3 days.

In the VIP lounge at the Tunis Carthage Airport, the Maltese prime minister gave a statement to the press in which he expressed his deep satisfaction with the visit and expressed his appreciation to President Bourguiba as well as to the prime minister and all the members of the government.

Dom Mintoff added that his visit to Tunisia had enabled him to see how rapid was the progress which had been made by the Tunisian people toward prosperity and development under the aegis of the government of President of Bourguiba led by Mohamed Mzali.

He also indicated that he had come to Tunis with the aim of making still more firm the ancient ties that unite Tunisia and Malta and strengthening bilateral relations in the fields of security, industry, and trade. In this connection, he expressed satisfaction with the willingness of the two sides to work toward cooperation for the best interests of the two peoples, stressing that his country would like particularly to promote maritime transport and commercial exchanges. He expressed, in this context, the hope that Mohamed Mzali as well as members of the Tunisian government will visit Malta in the near future.

Dom Mintoff also confirmed that Malta wishes to establish amicable relations with all the Arab countries, especially with Tunisia, in light of the ties of civilization which since antiquity have existed between the two countries. He also reaffirmed the vocation of his country to be a mediating factor between Europe and the African continent and made it known that Malta supports the Arab cause and the Palestinian cause while supporting its views as well as the preservation of peace in the Mediterranean region.

The Maltese prime minister was greeted on his departure by Mohamed Mzali, the prime minister, and Abdelmajid Karoui, director of protocol, as well as by several members of the government.

Before boarding the special aircraft that was to take him back to Malta, Mr Mintoff reviewed a military detachment which saluted him.

Joint Communiqué Issued

Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in French 13 Dec 80 p 5

[Text] Here is the joint communiqué published following the official visit made to Tunisia by Maltese Prime Minister Dom Mintoff:

Accompanied by an important delegation, Dom Mintoff, prime minister of Malta, on the invitation of Mohamed Mzali, made an official visit to Tunisia from 10 to 12 December 1980. Dom Mintoff had several talks with various ministers and was received in audience by His Excellency the president of the republic. During their talks and the working session held in the presence of their respective delegations, the two prime ministers reviewed, in an atmosphere marked by amity and cordiality, the principal international questions and issues of mutual interest, notably those having to do with the situation in the Mediterranean.

The two prime ministers thus had the opportunity to reaffirm their attachment to the fundamental principles of nonalignment and more specifically respect for the independence and sovereignty of states as well as territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs. They also expressed their attachment to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations as one of the most appropriate of means available for the peaceful resolution of international differences.

The Tunisian Government welcomes with satisfaction the decision of the Maltese people to adopt a position of neutrality and expressed its unreserved support for this new status.

After having mentioned current international issues, the two prime ministers reaffirmed the intention of their respective governments to work for peace wherever it is threatened. In this connection, they reiterated their support for the struggle of all peoples subjected to foreign domination and more particularly to the peoples of Palestine, Namibia, and South Africa.

The two prime ministers and their delegations also proceeded to a deeper examination of all aspects of bilateral relations. They expressed their determination in the near future to give new impetus to these relations and to search out ways and means for strengthening their cooperation. In this context, the Maltese and Tunisian delegations examined a series of concrete proposals aimed at developing economic and cultural cooperation between the two countries, most particularly in the fields of agriculture, trade, and tourism.

Dom Mintoff invited the Tunisian prime minister to visit Malta. Mohamed Mzali accepted this invitation with pleasure, the date of this visit to be fixed at a later time.

9516

CSO: 4400

TUNISIA

DESALINIZATION PLANT BEING READIED FOR 1982

Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in French 28 Nov 80 p 2

[Article by L.C.: "The Experimental Desalinization Plant Will Be Ready in 1982--Major Characteristic of This Plant: Utilizing Solar and Wind Energy"]

[Text] The establishment of an experimental desalinization plant at Borj Cedria is one of the main desalinization activities planned in Tunisia.

The objective is clear and simple: to establish desalinization research on solid bases and as a corollary to intensify the training of Tunisian specialists in desalinization.

This project is a timely one because it draws on solar energy, and even in our present stage of development it is advisable to opt for using that inexhaustible source of energy in all areas.

Salt Water and Fresh Water

How will the Borj Cedria desalinization plant work?

Without going too far into technical matters, we will start by saying that this plant, which will be set up on a site near the sea (so we are talking about desalinization of sea water), will be drawing water from a well sunk for this purpose. As soon as the water is pumped out it will be filtered, and then in a second stage it will be led to a unit of solar greenhouses. This is not the only unit that will be involved; the solar greenhouses will be backed up by a second unit for what desalinization scientists conventionally term "the phenomenon of reverse osmosis." What is this exactly?

This phenomenon, or rather the way it works, consists of joining up two big pipes end to end, and putting a very thin membrane between them. The first pipe is filled with fresh water, the second with salt water (sea water). The two pipes are subjected to unequal pressures at the same time. The salt water, which is subjected to distinctly greater pressure, filters through the membrane, getting rid of the salt it initially contained. Thus a greater quantity of fresh water is obtained. So there you have it: desalinized water. In a third unit, another technique is used, electrodialysis, which, as its name indicates, uses electrical energy produced from solar energy by means of photovoltaic cells. In small localities, solar greenhouses alone could provide major services. With exactly

this in mind, the [French] Atomic Energy Commission (CEA) has carried out a number of experiments which have yet to be put to practical use.

Sun and Wind

Why has the choice already been made to opt for substitute forms of energy, in this case solar and wind? Oil would have presumably done just fine....

Tunisia, rich in solar and wind energy, should not neglect these two energy sources which are increasingly highly prized, especially since a shortage of petroleum will not be long in taking shape. Plans call for the Borj Cedria plant to use two wind machines of the same or different sizes and a photovoltaic generator which will "convert" the sun's rays into electricity for the purpose of pumping sea water or desalinizing it.

Nothing Wasted

What will happen to the salt or "brine" separated out by the membrane?

In fact, nothing is wasted here either; everything just undergoes a transformation.

At present, brine taken from the salt lakes of southern Tunisia, after various reactions with phosphates, is changed into potassium salts (a basic component in fertilizer), magnesium salts (a raw material used to make "refractories") and bromine (which is used in making plastics).

Therefore, desalinization is relatively as useful for industry as for agriculture. But in fact, all this is far outweighed by another, much more crucial aspect: drinking water. That is the fundamental reason why the Borj Cedria plant exists, a plant which, according to Mr Larbi Ben Memmou, coordinator of the National Desalinization Program, is expensive, apparently more expensive than anyone was inclined to think at the outset.

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